













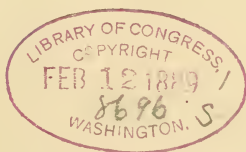
1176  
IDYLS

OF THE

# GOLDEN SHORE

BY

✓  
HU MAXWELL



NEW YORK AND LONDON

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS

The Knickerbocker Press

1889

S

PS 2375  
. M5

COPYRIGHT BY  
HU MAXWELL  
1887

Press of  
G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS  
New York

THE AUTHOR  
DEDICATES THIS VOLUME  
TO  
HIS FRIEND  
PROFESSOR A. W. FREDERICK



## INTRODUCTION.

“ There is a pleasure in the pathless woods ;  
There is a rapture on the lonely shore ;  
There is society where none intrudes,  
By the deep sea, and music in its roar.”

—BYRON.

THE thirty-six pieces of verse to be found in this book were written as fragments, no one depending upon or related to another. They were written, for the most part, at night by my camp-fire, while on the western plains and deserts, or during stormy days in the Sierra Nevada Mountains when I could not leave shelter ; frequently, also, in the noise and confusion of a camp full of frontiersmen or Indians with nothing to do but sing and talk.

Several of the pieces, in part or in full, have appeared in the newspapers, mostly in the *West Virginia School Journal*, *Wheeling Intelligencer*, *Preston Journal*, *Toledo Blade*, and the *Louisville Courier-Journal*. But I have changed all of them since then, I hope for the better. They all relate to California, or the “ Golden Shore,” that strange and beautiful country, different from all other lands of earth. I have endeavored to write as the subjects impressed themselves upon me.

As I said, what here appears is only a series of sketches, not a story with one purpose running through. Nor have I had the opportunity to give to them the systematic revision which I would like. Other work has prevented me from giving my attention to writing more than a few minutes or a few hours at a time. The book has not received as much as two full days of uninterrupted work ; but what I have done has been done by piecemeal. Nevertheless, it is as good as I can make it, or I would not publish it. I fear that similar expressions may be found in the different pieces more frequently than a better writer would have allowed.

Several verses of mine relative to California, that have appeared in the newspapers, will not be found in this volume. Some of them were omitted on account of their worthlessness, others because I could not secure copies of them. I had sent them to local papers in the West, and having lost the manuscripts, I could not secure copies of the papers. However, the loss is slight, and there is enough without them.

HU MAXWELL.

ST. GEORGE, W. VA., 1887.

## CONTENTS

---

	PAGE
PREFACE . . . . .	I
THE GOLDEN GATE . . . . .	9
A LEGEND OF LAKE TULARE . . . . .	13
THE BANDIT'S BRIDE . . . . .	16
SEÑORITAS . . . . .	58
A TRANSLATION . . . . .	61
THE BURNING RIVER . . . . .	63
THE CONQUEST . . . . .	70
SANTA CRUZ . . . . .	71
AVERNAL . . . . .	75
THE BOURNE . . . . .	79
THE PHANTOM LAKE . . . . .	80
CALIFORNIA . . . . .	89
THE SEA-GIRT ISLE . . . . .	90
THE HAUNTED HOUSE OF TULARE . . . . .	94
EL REFUJIO . . . . .	100
THE EXILE'S LAMENT . . . . .	103
THE BLUE QUAIL . . . . .	106
THE TWO SHIPS . . . . .	122
THE MOANING ROCK . . . . .	128
ÁDIOS . . . . .	134
SAN JOAQUIN . . . . .	138
NACIMIENTO . . . . .	148
AFAR . . . . .	179
ADA . . . . .	182
THE BRIDGE OF NIHILVIDEO . . . . .	184
DREAM ON . . . . .	191
INANIS . . . . .	192

	PAGE
THE EARTHQUAKE'S PATH . . . . .	195
MABEL ST. CLAIR . . . . .	212
THE RING . . . . .	214
ELESIE DEL QUAMADA . . . . .	215
KAWEAH . . . . .	218
BONNIBEL DE LA SANTA YNEZ . . . . .	225
BUENA VISTA . . . . .	231
A SONNET . . . . .	232

## PREFACE.

LOOK not in this for more than simple love  
For that fair country by the western sea,  
Where morns are ever fair, and blue above  
The skies are bending over wood and lea.  
Look not for more than this, I ask of thee,  
For to sublimer heights I cannot soar.  
The love of nature is my only plea,  
And this alone I offer—nothing more—  
On this I've built the Idyls of the Golden Shore.

Bear with me kindly, for too well I know  
How near the brink of failure was my way ;  
Full often I have fallen far below  
The merit of my theme, and cast my lay  
In fragile manner and in loose array.  
But kindly pardon this, and bear in mind  
My love is deeper than my words can say,  
And passion pants an utterance to find—  
Bear with me gently then, nor toward me be un-  
kind.

I've wandered far into the wildest West ;  
And that far wildest West has swept my soul,  
And set it quivering in a deep unrest,  
Beyond my bidding and beyond control.

I've watched the ocean's waters rise and roll  
Against the rocks that cliffed from mountains  
high ;

I've heard the murmurs rush on reef and shoal,  
Complaining all the night with moan and sigh,  
And in the morning hour grow faint, and cease,  
and die.

I've lingered by the rivers, pure and bright  
With all that summer mildness can bestow ;  
I've slept on flowers that clustered in the light,  
When sun of summer-time was sinking low ;  
I've felt the nightfall breezes softly blow  
Their blessings and perfumes along the land ;  
And over me the stars in mildest glow  
Have gleamed in heaven above like silver sand  
Strewn o'er the darker fields where endless plains  
expand.

The mountains, in their haughtiness and pride  
And glittering cold, have flashed all dazzling  
white  
Aloft above the world—the world defied ;—  
And I have asked me if the flood of light  
Was not sublimer than the shrinking sight  
Could reckon of ; and I have felt the rush  
Of passion-storms across my soul in flight,  
Roused from their resting, and resolved to brush  
All lowness from the earth, and what is base to  
crush.

That was the clime. Theocritus might sing  
His sweetest songs, and be forever heard ;

And Virgil might his music garlands fling  
With deeper measure on each flowing word,  
Had they but known this land. It would have  
stirred

Their kindling souls, the sweetly rhythmic clime  
Far in the west, where fronting cliffs engird  
A realm but lately touched upon in rhyme,  
The fairest realm of realms of this or ancient time.

Yet, lately touched ; for hands have swept the lyre  
To anthem idyls of that land of gold ;  
And legends have been clothed with mystic fire,  
Hearts kindled with a fervor as of old.

The muses whispered where the rivers rolled,  
And where the snowy mountains shade the  
plain ;

But even yet the half has not been told,  
And still remains the theme of music strain,  
And part, perchance, forever will untold remain.

Ye bards of the Sierras, ye who sung  
Of valleys fair and hills of snowy sheen,  
Far on the western shore where nature flung  
Her riches down upon a world of green,—  
Ye who have sung of such, think not between  
Thine own and mine—thy dream and mine—  
shall rise

Aught that shall mar or ruffle the serene  
That rests where sympathy the truest lies—  
My feelings knit with thine in deepest kindred ties.

Then, bards of the Sierras—of the land  
That blooms in beauty by the western sea—

With lance I touch your helmets—not to stand  
For combat or for tournament with ye—  
I touch your helmets gently. Think of me  
As one who truly loves that western shore ;  
And in your love, how much soe'er that be,  
I'm with ye ; and I with ye will adore  
In deed and truth forever and forevermore.

If thou shalt find reiteration oft  
Of azure skies and flowers blooming fair,  
And snowy peaks where mountains rise aloft  
O'er rivers flowing crystal as the air,  
'T is but the truth, for such are everywhere  
Among the splendors of that dreaming land ;  
'T is flowers, flowers, flowers, rich and rare,  
And rivers flowing, flowing, o'er the sand  
Of gold, and high above are mountains wild and  
grand.

I've dealt as I have felt in all the throng  
Of nature and emotion that were mine ;  
My deeper spirit hath been swept along  
In the proud current of the theme divine.  
My sympathy and love are mixed with thine,  
Thou realm of light and gladness in the West ;  
And now my ruder hands a wreath would twine  
From flowers of brightness in their beauty  
dressed,  
Thou Golden Shore, thou clime of happiness and  
rest.

And if at times emotion storms have burst  
In wildness o'er me in the darker hours ;

And if in anger I have turned and cursed,  
    Forgive my weakness. When the tempest lowers  
I cannot see above me blooming flowers,  
    But only night, in all its gloomy reign ;  
Forgive me then, for oft my hate devours  
    My kindlier feelings ; and full oft the pain  
Of blighted hopes return to taunt me with dis-  
    dain.

For dreams will come to me from out the past,  
    From days of happiness which are no more.  
Then those who never loved me come and cast  
    Their scorn upon me as in days of yore ;  
And the rebellion rises, and I pour  
    Unfathomed hate upon whate'er is near.  
Gloom from the past of sadness gathers o'er,  
    And I am lost awhile in memories drear,  
Which pass away again and then again appear.

Would that it were not so ; for I would dress  
    In gladness and in sunshine what is fair—  
To think of thee should be to love and bless,  
    Thou realm beside the sea, thou Beauty's share  
Of all the earth. But memories of despair  
    Can cloud a heaven ; and the brightest day  
That ever dawned hath brought to some one care ;  
    Hath brought a sorrow that hath passed away  
Alone with coming night of shadows drear and  
    gray.

A shade of sadness like a dull regret  
Has brooded o'er me when I wished to feel

Alone with calmest mood ; fain to forget  
The blighted hopes that slowly round me steal.  
What I have felt I wished not to conceal ;  
I've spoken all—all that I could express ;  
But what was deepest, words could not reveal—  
And that was smothered back by hard duress,  
A part was bliss, and part was kindred to distress.

For when I lingered where the rivers flow  
In calmness onward like a summer dream,  
My memories wandered to the long ago,  
And kindled in the brightness of a gleam  
That shines for me no more, except to seem  
As it has been, and then my feelings deep  
Have flooded in upon me, like a stream  
Of deluged cataracts, where torrents keep  
The cañon cliffs aroar with rush, and plunge, and  
leap.

Clime of the West ! my offering I lay  
Down by thy shrine, and humbly leave it there,  
Scarce worth the room, but there is room for aye  
For all mementoes of that country fair.  
What mine is worth is given free as air  
To what I love. It ever shall be so :  
No middle ground to me is anywhere ;  
Bloom lives eternal ; or eternal blow  
The storms of winter's breath that wildly come  
and go.

Clime of the West, and hearts forever true,  
That dwell beyond the occidental hills !

Above, the heavens are bending, high and blue,  
And flowers beneath, the air with odors fill.  
Believe not that I am a stranger still  
Intruding with rude steps upon thy shore ;  
Believe this not, for I have felt the thrill  
Of gladness that is thine for evermore,  
And am no alien now as in the years of yore.

Remember me as one who never knew  
Aught but a depth of love for thee and thine ;  
Remember me as one whose heart is true  
In all it claims, and who would fondly twine  
One garland more of bloom and columbine  
Around thy dreamy beauty—not to kneel  
In idol worship down in blind design,  
But every word I say to think and feel,  
Emotions too intense to smother or conceal.

Then, if the legends of the shadowy past,  
Wrapped in the vagueness of the far away,  
Are in the mold of my own passions cast,  
This much believe : I honestly essay  
To paint as I have seen and felt, and lay  
All fantasies and falsities aside,  
And be myself awhile, and give the day  
To light and not to shadows, and abide  
The work of hope, and love, and patriotic pride.

Bear then the errors kindly ; well I feel  
How little I have touched upon the theme  
That lay before me. Vesture can't conceal  
All that of beauty lives within the dream.

On this I ground my hope that thou wilt deem  
Not faults as most, but what is true and fair,  
Beyond the dimness of the error gleam ;  
And that thou wilt in adoration share  
With me a love of light and beauty everywhere.

## THE GOLDEN GATE.

WHERE the mountains break abruptly from  
their domes of mist and gloom,  
Down to vernal vales and valleys, bright with  
flowers in their bloom,  
Where the ocean's waves grow milder as they sink  
into their rest  
In that harbor's placid stillness, at the Gateway of  
the West ;

There a beauteous city rises, looking over all below,  
O'er the images of mountains, pictured where the  
billows flow  
Slowly, grandly, and unbroken through the rock-  
embattled strait,  
From the wide and dreary ocean, landward through  
the Golden Gate.

City, resting in thy beauty on thy ocean-fretted hills,  
Like an Oriental vision, vivid as when slumber fills  
All the world with fairy phantoms ; City on the  
shining shore  
Of thy greenland occidental, thou art beauteous  
evermore !  
Thou art sitting at the portal of this summer-bloom-  
ing land,

With its clear and crystal rivers rushing o'er the  
golden sand ;  
Thou art proud and regal, City, sitting on thy throne  
of state,  
Hailing ships from every ocean sailing through the  
Golden Gate.

Guard them well, as thou hast guarded in the years  
which are no more ;  
Hail them welcome, welcome, welcome, welcome to  
the shining shore !  
Smile across the waste of waters ; let the mirror of  
the deep  
Limner thee in all thy beauty, till the waves are  
lulled to sleep ;  
Till the billows cease their raging on the rocks and  
reefs afar,  
And are dreaming in the beaming of the gleaming  
vesper star.  
Beckon gladsome words of welcome from thy  
queenly throne of state  
To the sails that come forever sweeping through  
the Golden Gate.

O what thousand myriad thousand sails from earth's  
remotest seas,  
Driven long before the tempests, have come swelling  
with the breeze  
Gladly to the promised haven underneath the  
friendly hill,  
Safe at last from the tornadoes that the roaring  
ocean fill !

O what hopes and what ambitions, and what long-  
ings and unrest

Have come proudly up the harbor of this Venice  
of the West !

O the hopes and disappointments—spirits crushed  
by iron fate,

Bright a moment, hoping, longing, sweeping through  
the Golden Gate !

Gate of Beauty, bid them welcome. Mock not  
hope that runneth wild ;

Thou hast sheltered and protected many and many  
a truant child,

Kneeling down to thee in blindness, offering him-  
self to thee ;

For thee leaving home and country out beyond the  
stormy sea.

Shore of Brightness, thou hast bidden them to  
come from every clime,

Hast allured them with the vaguest dreams e'er  
told in prose or rhyme ;

And they hearkened to thy whisper, and with  
boundless hope elate,

Came they, borne by sails of silver, sweeping  
through the Golden Gate.

There are histories unwritten, stories never to be  
told,

Dreams unrealized and fading like the fantasies of  
old ;

There were hopes that are no longer, with their  
idols they have died,

On the desert and the mountain they have perished  
side by side ;  
Highest aims were those that counted least in sum-  
ming at the last ;  
Schemes that wove the stars in garlands have to  
every wind been cast.  
Vain ! But ignorance had blessed them ; bur-  
nished guilt concealed the fate  
That was lurking in the very shadows of the Gold-  
en Gate.

Golden Gate, thou shining portal of the beauteous  
land and fair,  
Thou the minion of the ocean, seas, and islands  
everywhere !  
Were it well to wish that ever thou mayst be as in  
the yore,  
Isle-Calypso of the nations, weary dreamer's Lotus  
Shore !  
Is the mystic spell yet broken ? Has the vision  
vanished yet ?  
Art thou still the sunlit haven, though a thousand  
suns have set ?  
By the ocean art thou waiting, and ambitious still  
to wait  
For the Future's fleets and navies, O thou won-  
drous Golden Gate !

## A LEGEND OF LAKE TULARE.

LONG ago, in time romantic,  
L Says the legendary lore ;  
Long before the wide Atlantic  
Bore Columbus to our shore ;  
In a castle green with bowers,  
All encircled round with flowers,  
Once there was an exiled fairy  
Had a home by Lake Tulare.

Beautiful, with trees before it,  
Stood the castle on the strand,  
And the breezes whispered o'er it  
Like the winds of Fairy-land ;  
And the lily-vines were clinging  
O'er the walls, and birds were singing  
Where the passing sun and shadow  
Played around that El Dorado.

When all storms were sweetly sleeping  
On the waters calm and still,  
And the waving willows weeping,  
Gently felt the zephyr's thrill,  
Then the fairy oft went sailing  
In a boat with silver railing,  
Trimmed with roses, lightly riding  
O'er Tulare, gliding, gliding.

Many and many a year had ended,  
And the fairy still was there ;  
Ne'er had human feet descended  
Near the castle anywhere ;  
Yet she ne'er was sad or lonely,  
She was nature's, nature's only,  
Softly, sweetly singing, sailing  
In the boat with silver railing.

In the springtime's happy hours,  
When the sky was blue and clear,  
And the fragrance from the flowers  
Down the shore was wafted near ;  
Then the fairy's song rose clearer,  
And the echoes hovered nearer  
Round the boat with silver railing,  
O'er Tulare sailing, sailing.

But one eve, the fairy, sleeping  
'Neath the sweet and silent shade,  
Heard a voice like some one weeping ;  
She awoke and felt afraid.  
Then came strangers rudely riding  
Down the shore. She, quickly gliding  
In her boat with silver railing,  
O'er the lake went sailing, sailing.

Then the trees and castle faded—  
Melted in the evening air—  
And the ugly lake-birds waded  
Where had bloomed the gardens fair ;  
And when came the strangers, castle,  
Flower, tendril, wreath, and tassel,

All were gone, and sunlight only  
Lit the lake shore, drear and lonely.

And the boat with silver railing  
Passed and left no wave or wake,  
While the evening wind was wailing  
O'er the lonely, lonely lake.  
All was fading, sunlight clinging  
To the sails, the sweet voice singing  
Where the falling mists were blended,  
As the evening shades descended.

Farther off the light boat glided,  
Farther off across the tide ;  
And the crystal waves divided,  
Lightly shone on either side—  
On until the vision ended,  
Where the sky and waters blended,  
And no more the blue-eyed fairy  
Sailed and sang o'er Lake Tulare.

## THE BANDIT'S BRIDE.

CAME ye through that death-like valley south-  
ward from Penoche's land,  
Where mirages loom forever over plains of burning  
sand ;  
Where the winds from off Los Baños never turn  
and never rest,  
Blowing like a raging furnace from the deserts of  
the West ?  
There it is that sunshine never fell on verdure or  
on bloom ;  
There eternal death hath silenced all in one unhon-  
ored tomb.  
Never comes the springtime, never throbs the pulse  
of nature's life ;  
Summer's fire and winter's tempests hold their  
anarchy and strife ;  
Rain and sleet of bleak December spend their rage  
and pass away,  
Followed by the blight and fever of the summer's  
fiery day.  
Up and down the desolation of the rocks and of  
the caves,  
Sands are piled in broken ridges, like the ocean's  
broken waves.—  
Came ye by that valley, coming from the plains of  
Chualar ?

Thou hast seen the rack and torment of creation  
in despair ;  
Thou hast seen the wreck and ruin of a blighted  
valley curst  
With a doom unsparing, darkest, merciless, the last  
and worst.

In the caverns of that valley, in the days that are  
no more,  
Was the home of Vasques, darkest name e'er known  
to bandit lore.  
He it was whose hands were gory in the deepness  
of the night,  
And who fled to caves and mountains ere the  
dawning of the light.  
Many a victim he had buried in the midnight desert  
sands ;  
Many a murdered friend he 'd hidden where Horn-  
itos Forest stands ;  
Many a deed, too dark and awful for the crimson  
page of crime,  
Had been his, from Calaveras down Tujunga's  
dreary clime.  
Sad and fearful is the story of his vengeance and  
his wrath,  
Of the deeds of woe unspoken that proclaimed his  
every path.  
At his name a chill of terror turned the cheek of  
manhood white,  
Awe and dread could picture spectres in the deep-  
ness of the night.

Friend in all his fierce maraudings was his horse, a  
mighty steed,  
Black as night, and like a tempest in endurance  
and in speed.  
Like a whirlwind from the mountains, man and  
horse would onward sweep  
Over hills, and rocks, and deserts, over crag and  
cañon steep ;  
Up and down the barren ridges, out across the  
gloomy plain,  
Tireless, man and horse dashed onward, spurning  
deserts with disdain.  
Far across the sea of prairie, toward the Table  
Mountain height,  
Vasques and his steed were sweeping like a phan-  
tom of the night.  
Those who saw but dimly, vaguely, man and horse  
in evening gloom,  
Knew that ere the dawn of morning somewhere  
there would fall a doom ;  
Those who saw in dusk of evening Vasques and  
his steed of night  
Sweeping from the Idria Cañons, o'er the plains in  
tireless flight,  
Knew the import and the meaning, knew full well  
what was in store  
For the miners ere the morning on the Joaquin's  
distant shore.

But 't was useless to pursue him ; better chase a  
winter storm ;

He 'd escape them in the darkness like a fleeting  
phantom form ;  
And before the sun of morning on the hills and  
deserts shone,  
He had done his work and vanished toward the  
mountains of Jolon.  
Next perhaps at San Obispo he would burst upon  
the sight,  
In his path of pillage, sweeping on his steed as  
dark as night.  
Well they knew him there and dreaded, well they  
knew how more than vain  
To pursue him ; he would taunt them as he swept  
across the plain ;  
He would fling his arm defiant, shout "*oveja !*" as  
he dashed  
Up the steep beyond ; the rocky ledges 'neath him  
flamed and flashed,  
Scarred by steel-shod hoofs ; his charger seemed  
to taunt and to disdain  
Those who followed, and defiant shook his flowing  
midnight mane,  
Brushing in the face of Vasques as he passed the  
summit crest  
Of the hills, and left the Valley of Salinas to the  
west.  
O'er the Huer-Huero river he would pass, and o'er  
the steep  
Of the southern Sacramento man and horse like  
winds would sweep,  
Plunge across Estrelle's torrents angered by the  
winter's rains,

Out and up along the vista of Cholame's deluged  
    plains ;  
Till amid the dark recesses of his home the rocks  
    among,  
Far away beneath the mountains, he to ground had  
    lightly sprung,  
Left his horse to wait returning, climbed a high  
    and looming ledge  
Overlooking all the country of Tulare's farthest  
    edge,—  
Climbed and looked, lest in the distance foemen  
    were upon his path—  
He would meet them, he would greet them, doom  
    for doom and wrath for wrath !  
Gazed he over all the region far away on every side,  
Hills, and floods, and wastes, and deserts, rolling  
    like the ocean tide.  
Nothing human, nothing living ; silent all things,  
    save the moan  
Of the winds along the ledges. He was safe : he  
    was alone.  
Down the steep of rocks he hurried, and the smit-  
    ten granite rang  
'Neath his rowelled heels ; and daggers smote with  
    low and deadly clang  
'Gainst his belt of pistols. Downward over rocks  
    that seemed to spurn  
Human feet. His night-black charger proudly  
    waited his return.

Home again unharmed, and Vasques stroked his  
    horse. Then in the shade

Of his cave he counted over what he 'd garnered in  
the raid.

As he counted gold and silver and the jewels he  
had brought,

O'er his swarthy face were passing light and shade  
that told his thought—

Light of rapture ; disappointment's shade ; for  
some were valued less

Than he thought for ; part were gorgeous ; part he  
held as nothingness.

Counted down, he hid his treasure, with the spoils  
of raids before,

In a secret crystal crevice underneath the cavern  
door.

This was Vasques, he the terror of the borders and  
frontiers,

Curse of California's valleys in the rush of earlier  
years.

This his home, his rest from raiding ; hither often  
he had fled,

Chased by bands of daring horsemen who had left  
the cañons red

With their blood, too hard pursuing on the hunted  
bandit's trail,—

Blood along the deep abysses truly told the awful  
tale,—

Told how they had pressed too eager on him in the  
dark ravine,

How he fiercely turned upon them as they passed  
the cliffs between ;

Turned and slew them ; as the tiger turns when  
    baying hounds pursue,  
Turns and tears them, then at leisure glides the  
    dusky jungle through.

In a vine-clad valley blooming brightly all the summer day,  
Fanned by winds that come and softly breathe  
    perfumes o'er San José,  
Lived a young and beauteous maiden, fairer than  
    the fairest flowers  
That e'er blossomed in the trellised arches of the  
    southern bowers.  
Never was there maiden fairer in that country of  
    the fair ;  
Never happier or truer, lovelier, more debonair.  
Scarcely did the dawn of morning, dashing with  
    its gold the world,  
Lend a lustre to the river and the brooks that  
    played and purled  
Down the meadow lands forever, till she came with  
    footsteps light  
O'er the pathway through the pastures of the wild  
    alfalfa bright,  
And she pondered like one dreaming, lingering for  
    hours and hours  
'Neath the shadows of the willows on the shining  
    shore of flowers.  
There she met a dark-eyed stranger who like her  
    was lingering there,  
And his face was dull with sadness and his brow  
    was knit with care.

He was Vasques, the mysterious ; he was weary  
with the flight ;  
He had fled, pursued by horsemen, many and many  
a day and night.  
But he had outstripped pursuers in the midnight of  
the chase,  
And had left their fleetest horsemen far behind  
him in the race.  
He had shouted his defiance to them straggling far  
below  
As he vanished o'er the summit of the heights of  
Pajaro.  
But while plunging down the steepness, breaking  
from the northern side  
Of the hills, and while the distant men and horse  
he still defied,  
O'er a cliff unseen his charger leaped, and crash-  
ing through the trees,  
Struck the rocks below—bewildered—wheeled and  
sank upon his knees—  
Groaned, and stretched along the boulders. Breath-  
less now the mighty horse.  
Vasques stood a moment silent in his anger and  
remorse.  
“ Rather had I died than this ; and would 't were I  
instead of thee !  
Would that I were dead, and thou wert roaming  
o'er the prairies free ! ”  
So he spoke ; but as he spoke it, from the over-  
hanging ledge  
The pursuers yelling greet him. Looking down-  
ward from the edge

Of the precipice above him, there they saw the  
mighty steed  
Stretched upon the rocks. They shouted and  
wheeled each with dashing speed,  
Rushing toward a pathway leading down the cliff,  
with whoop and yell  
Sounding through the midnight cañons like the  
battle screams of hell.

Vasques stroked his horse and muttered : "Dead,  
my charger, art thou dead ?  
Wert thou living, I would never leave thee till the  
rocks were red  
With the blood of those who taunt us. I would  
with thee stay and die,  
Fighting for thee, and together in one grave we  
both should lie.—  
Art thou dead, my noble courser—dead ! 'T is use-  
less now to wait ;  
'T will at best avail thee nothing—waiting will  
but seal my fate."  
As he spoke, they rushed upon him from the woods  
on every side ;  
Seized him—but his deadly dagger in their blood  
was crimson dyed.  
And the three who pressed him hardest and were  
grappling in their strife  
First to seize him, paid the fearful cost of rashness  
with their life.  
Then he dashed adown the thickets where the  
manzanita grew

Densely deep and lapped together till no horseman  
could pursue.

Wrenching from his heels the rowels that were  
worse than useless now,

He fled fleetly, and at morning passed the farthest  
mountain brow,

And before him saw the valley glowing in the light  
of day,

And afar the groves of linden on the plains of San  
José.

There he stood a moment gazing out across the  
distant scene,

To the northward where the meadows rolled away  
in changeless green.

Back behind him mountains mingled, widely in a  
shapeless mass,

Barren ridges, seamed with many a gulch-ravine  
and cañon pass,

Rocks, and cliffs, and spurs, and ledges, flung to-  
gether rude and wild ;

Ragged peaks and domes above them in confusion  
heaped and piled.

Far along the south horizon dimly in the distance ran  
Last in view the even summit of the Mountain  
Gavilan.

Vasques rested but a moment on the height, for  
well he knew

Soon along the distant ridges foes again would  
sweep in view.

Down the mountain side he hastened, clinging to  
the jags of flint

Jutting from the soil of syenite ; set his heels with  
din and dint  
In the narrow shelves ; and downward passed he  
cautiously and slow,  
Ridge by ridge, from gulch to cañon, till he reached  
the plain below.  
Down along the quiet river where the trees were  
dense and green  
He pursued his way in silence through the glad-  
some summer scene ;  
Under drooping weeping willows ; under quaking  
aspen bowers,  
Passed he silently and sadly in the radiant morning  
hours.  
Not for self alone the darkness and the sadness  
and remorse,  
But he thought how crushed and lifeless was his  
faithful, faithful horse.  
For himself he cared not, feared not ; there was  
nothing now to fear ;  
He had nothing now to care for ; all was dead that  
e'er was dear.  
Neither feared he man, nor spirit of the dead or of  
the lost :  
Life was his, and he would sell it at such high and  
fearful cost  
That the buyer would go with him bankrupt to the  
realms of night,—  
Plunge in hate's embrace together cursing through  
the downward flight.  
But his horse—would they insult him ; Dared  
they touch him now in death ?

Touch that horse which they could never touch  
while he had living breath—  
Would they with their coward hands now dare to  
stroke that midnight mane,  
Which, like raven wings of darkness, had defied  
them on the plain?  
Which had streamed on desert tempest and along  
the mountain height,  
'Mid the whirlwinds and tornadoes, darker than  
the blackest night?  
“Never!” spoke in wrath the robber; “would that  
I had fought and died  
For my horse—it were a comfort to have perished  
at his side!”

Thus at morn along the river he was pacing to and  
fro,  
Waiting, as the lion waiteth, for the coming of the foe.  
“I will be pursued no farther,” spoke he; “I will  
die at least  
Like a man—I am no coward—neither am I brute  
or beast!  
I will wait; and it were better they should never  
press me here—  
Better vex not him who hath not aught on earth to  
love or fear!”  
As he spoke, the fire of vengeance lit the darkness  
of his eye,  
And he stood at bay, determined there to live, or  
there to die;—  
Stood he there beneath the willows where the  
morning wind was low,

Saying he would fly no farther from the wrath of  
mortal foe.

And while waiting, keenly watching through the  
willows for the band

Of pursuers whom he hated as a curse upon the  
land,

Came the sound of footsteps lightly down the  
shaded arbor way,

And before him hesitating stood the Maid of San  
José.

Scarcely had he heard her coming, for so softly did  
she tread,

Till beside him she was standing, half in wonder,  
half in dread.

Tall he was, and proud, and manly, though of fea-  
ture stern and cold,

Face of firmness and of coldness, cast in dark Cas-  
tilian mold.

Checked by wonder and amazement, stood she still  
as one who fears

Something strangely unexpected that in sudden-  
ness appears.

Scarcely was he less astonished, and he turned in  
quick surprise,

All the spirit of his nature flashing deeply from his  
eyes :—

Turned and saw the maiden standing, and he  
marked her slight alarm,

Like one fearing, like one turning from a half-sus-  
pected harm.

All his youthful pride and kindness came again  
upon him then ;

All his sullen hate and vengeance toward the race  
of mortal men  
Seemed to vanish for the moment ; and his thoughts  
had flown away  
To the far Xenil, bright river, where he passed his  
youthful day ;  
Where he loved and lost, and never saw a solace  
in the world  
After that, but wrecked and ruined to the tempest  
he was hurled—  
Flung upon the wild commotion of a proud and  
blighted life,  
Left to battle with the whirlwinds in their anarchy  
and strife ;  
While his bitter disappointments preyed upon him  
like a fire,  
Fiercely burning ever, leaving nothing but a mad  
desire.  
To overwhelm the flames of passion and to stifle  
dull regret,  
And to drug his memory till he could awhile the  
past forget,  
He had turned upon the faithless race of men, and  
everywhere  
He had made them feel how fearful is the courage  
of despair.  
All the past came like a picture o'er him when he  
saw the maid  
Standing, fearing, wondering, dreaming in the som-  
bre willow shade.  
She was like that youthful maiden whom he once  
had proudly claimed,

And beneath her love and kindness all his way-  
wardness was tamed ;  
But who had been banished from him, torn away,  
although she pled  
'Gainst the hardness of her fate, and soon was  
numbered with the dead.  
All of this in recollection came before him as he  
stood  
By the river lowly flowing through the shadows of  
the wood.  
“ Do not fear me, gentle maiden ; though a stranger,  
I can tell  
That thou fearest—do not fear me—fear me not—  
I wish thee well.”  
She had almost turned to leave him, turned al-  
though she knew not why.  
At his words she hesitated, turned again to make  
reply.  
All the fountains of emotion that are known to  
woman's soul  
Were in hers, and welled unbidden like a tide be-  
yond control ;  
And she listened as he told her not to fear, that he  
was kind  
To the kind, and would not harm her, and that she  
would ever find  
Him a friend in time of danger if that hour should  
ever fall—  
True and tried, and at her bidding—ever ready at  
her call.  
Then he told her he was Vasques.—At the name  
her pallid cheek

Told how well she knew his story, though she did  
not move or speak.

Then he told her, low and truly, how for days the  
rushing band

Had pursued him from Avalda's cliffs that front  
the ocean strand ;

How he taunted and defied them ; how his horse  
as black as night

Had outstripped them in the desert, mocked them  
from the mountain height ;

Galloped leisurely before them over valley, waste,  
and plain,

Tantalizing them, and flaunting on the wind his  
streaming mane ;

Till along the highlands sweeping, down a blind  
abyss he fell—

Crushed to death.—But Vasques faltered, could not  
speak, or could not tell

How his faithful horse had perished—words were  
stifled by his grief,

And his hand which ne'er had trembled, trembled  
like an aspen leaf.

In a moment he could master all his feelings, and  
disguise ;

While the maiden stood in silence and the tears  
had filled her eyes.

“ But,” he said, “ since then, I care not if I die or  
if I live.

There is nothing under heaven that would tempt  
me to forgive

Those who killed my horse. I 'm waiting here, and  
here I mean to wait  
For their coming. I will greet them in the rapture  
of my hate.  
When thou seest the band approaching, gentle  
maiden, turn away ;  
'T were not well for thee to witness what this grove  
shall see to-day."  
Even as he spoke, a rushing sounded from the  
upper plain ;  
And a horse of midnight blackness, powerful of  
neck and mane,  
Riderless across the prairie headlong dashed at  
frightful speed—  
Vasques shouted in defiance, for he knew his faith-  
ful steed—  
Vasques flung his arm and shouted, ran to meet  
his horse that came  
Bounding, while the golden mountings of the saddle  
shone like flame  
'Gainst the blackness of the charger ; and the reins  
of bridle flung  
Wildly through the air their silver-bangled chains  
that pendant hung.  
Vasques met his horse, and shouted, and the  
charger made reply,  
Neighing fiercely, leaping wildly, mane and neck  
were proud and high—  
Nearer till they rushed together in their ecstasy,  
at length ;  
Vasques spoke—the horse was gentle, tame, but  
terrible in strength

“Never,” said the bandit, “never shall we part on earth again !

Nevermore will I desert thee to the touch of mortal men !

Never since the world has known me have I seen such day as this !

Never have the wings of fortune shadowed me with such a bliss !

Now forever and forever, while the tide of life shall flow,

Will we part no more, for hatred or for love of friend or foe !”

And the proud horse stood beside him ; and as Vasques would have sprung

To the saddle, he drew backward—In the stirrup tightly hung

Some one’s boot ! And Vasques backward stood a moment in surprise ;

Stood and glared in speechless anger—death was flashing from his eyes.

“Curse the villain, curse !” he muttered as he saw what had been done ;

“They have tried to mount my charger—curse forever every one !

They have found him stunned and stupid where the hidden ledges rise,

Where I thought him dead. But living, they have held him for their prize ;

And some reckless villain mounted to the saddle, but in vain ;

He was hurled to earth and trampled, dragged and trampled o’er the plain ;

And along the rugged mountain now his mangled  
body lies—  
None but me can ride my charger : he who tries it  
surely dies !  
No one's hand but mine shall ever hold that rein ;  
and none shall dare  
Touch that saddle—He who does it shall find death  
his certain share ! ”  
Tearing out the hated trophy from the stirrup,  
Vasques sprung  
To the golden-mounted saddle, and the chains of  
silver rung ;  
While the steed was rearing, plunging in the mad-  
ness of delight,  
Mingling with the jewelled housings, mane as black  
as Egypt's night.

Scarcely what it meant surmising, scarcely know-  
ing what to say,  
All the while in wonder waiting, stood the Maid of  
San José ;  
Looking on in silent wonder from the shadows all  
the while,  
Ever casting glances o'er the prairies rolling many  
a mile.  
But, now mounted, Vasques told her all, and told  
her how he feared  
Nothing now, nor cared how quickly the pursuing  
band appeared.  
He would wait till half surrounded, then would  
dash away and sweep

Onward, eastward o'er the prairie like a tempest  
o'er the deep ;

' Twere in vain, he said, that horsemen should pursue  
him in his flight ;

He would taunt them and upbraid them from the  
morning till the night ;

From the night until the morning, through the  
shadows and the gloom,

He would call to them and mock them and allure  
them to their doom.

O the shallow heart of woman, changing as the  
shadows change !

Turning from the true and noble, leaning toward  
the wild and strange ;

Looking ever to a level lower than her native  
sphere ;

Giddy-headed, undecided. Where romances most  
appear,

There you find her, there you meet her ; there you  
evermore will find.

She will follow handsome phantoms and will leave  
the world behind.

She will turn to what is newest, and her destiny  
will cast

At the feet of whom she knows not.—To be best is  
to be last.

She had learned to love the bandit, though what he  
had been she knew,

What he was she knew ; and plainly all the future  
was in view.

But of that she reckoned nothing : planned as  
women always plan,  
Planned from darkness to redeem him, make of  
him a noble man.  
Woman's weakness ! woman's error ! her most fatal,  
deadly snare !  
Better try to build a heaven from the ruins of  
despair ;  
Better try to form a diamond from the dust of  
powdered slate ;  
Better try to change to beauty all the shapes of  
horrid hate—  
Kneel—for this alone can save thee—fall implor-  
ing on thy knees,  
Plead in prayer to gracious Heaven to forgive such  
thoughts as these !  
For thou canst not, blinded woman, lead again to  
light of day  
Him who hath himself abandoned, and hath flung  
himself away.  
He and thou will sink together ; he the millstone  
at thy neck,  
Dragging thee beneath the billows, downward from  
the drifting wreck.  
Thou art woman. Be a woman. Give not nature's  
plan the lie.  
Thou art meant to live for man, and not for him to  
fall and die.  
Thou art meant to be the sunshine that will light  
along his life.  
Thou art not his passion's consort. Thou shouldst  
be his spirit's wife.

There at morn beside the river where the quaking  
  shadows lay,  
Listening to the bandit's story stood the Maid of  
  San José.  
And the warmth of all her nature in the blue of  
  dreaming eyes  
Shone as sunlight glows and deepens through the  
  summer's azure skies.  
As the lifewarm helianthus leans to brightness from  
  above,  
So a woman's deep existence turns to him who  
  speaks of love—  
Turns to him who softly whispers words almost too  
  low to hear ;  
But she knows the meaning—words are ne'er too  
  low for woman's ear ;  
Meaning never is too hidden for the wisdom of her  
  heart—  
To interpret love unspoken is a woman's native  
  art.  
But the dream of bliss must vanish. Brightly thus  
  the morning passed,  
Till across the plain afar the troop of horse ap-  
  peared at last.  
Though the Spaniard's eye discerned them while  
  they yet were far away,  
Yet he of their coming spoke not to the Maid of  
  San José ;  
And she knew not danger threatened, till the bandit  
  lightly sprang  
To the saddle, while the nearer hoofs across the  
  prairie rang.

“Á Dios”—adieu—he whispered—“Sometime we  
shall meet again ;  
But I now must turn attention to this troop of fated  
men—  
Á Dios !” He bounded forward, in defiance fling-  
ing high  
In the air his arm. The horsemen even then were  
rushing by  
Where the maiden stood. They saw not any one  
was standing there,  
So intently were they looking after Vasques through  
the glare  
Of the noonday sun. She heard them cursing  
fiercely as they passed,  
Saying that the taunting Spaniard would have debts  
to pay at last.  
Words there were no more, for even then a pistol  
shot was heard,  
And the horsemen in confusion for a moment  
scarcely stirred—  
Shocked and stunned ; and then she saw them lift-  
ing up a bloody form  
From the ground, the lifetide ebbing from the  
temples throbbing warm.  
Turned she then away, remembering that she had  
been told to turn  
If pursuers pressed him. Truth of all she now  
could see and learn ;  
Turned away, and in a moment looked again and  
saw the mane  
Brushing Vasques’ face who galloped grandly o’er  
the distant plain.

Then she turned away, and hurried homeward from  
the fearful scene,  
Till the view of plain and horsemen all was hid in  
arbors green.

It would be a mere recital of what has been said  
before

To narrate the flight of Vasques all the plains and  
mountains o'er.

'T was the same pursuit determined and the same  
evasive flight,

Same upbraiding and defying from the noonday till  
the night,

From the darkness till the morning 't was the same  
defiance still,

Galloping at random leisure over valley, vale, and  
hill.

Many a time so near upon him came they in the  
darksome maze

That the powder from his pistol scorched their  
faces like a blaze ;

But as often he would vanish like a spectre from  
the sight,

Plunged and lost amid the darkness and the shad-  
ows of the night.

When the morning dawned, 't was ended ; they had  
given up the chase ;

He was miles before them sweeping Idria Moun-  
tain's ancient face.

And he quickly scaled the summit ; and along the  
awful crest

'Gainst the morning sky he galloped toward the  
wildness of the west.

Baffled, angry, and exhausted the pursuers back-  
ward turned ;

Hot with wrath and indignation, every haggard  
visage burned.

Slowly sought their homes, the horsemen—riding  
slow in single file,

Sullen in their backward journey through the val-  
leys many a mile.

Vasques reached his hidden cañon as he oft had  
done before,

And there flung himself in slumber on his cavern's  
stony floor.

In his dreams there passed before him horsemen  
o'er the rocky way ;

While beside him, sweetly smiling, stood the maid  
of San José.

Then it seemed that lowly o'er him she was kneel-  
ing, whispering low,

Like his loved and lost who perished broken-  
hearted long ago.

'T was a dream, he knew it, fleeting ; 't was a  
dream that soon was gone.

He awoke. The winds above him tirelessly were  
rushing on,

As they rush and rush forever in the madness of  
their flight,

Through the hollow rocks that murmur, like the  
spirits of the night.

He awoke. The day was lonely. Silent was the  
desert world,  
Save the moaning wind, and nearer lispings of a  
brook that purred  
Faintly with a dreamy cadence over crystal ledge  
and stone,  
Just beneath the cavern doorway where the noon-  
tide brightness shone.  
Then he slept again. Again the dream came to  
him as he slept :  
Past him bands of cursing horsemen like a raging  
tempest swept.  
But beside him, sweetly smiling, kneeling like one  
kneels to pray,  
Whispering gently and confiding, knelt the Maid of  
San José.  
Then it seemed the storm was over, that the  
danger-clouds were past,  
That the wildness of his nature had been tamed in  
peace at last.  
Dreaming there, he thought that something might  
be left for him on earth,  
Other than a life of danger. He could feel the  
soothing worth  
Of a woman's love ; and never, thought he as he  
slept and dreamed,  
Had the sunshine o'er his pathway with a brighter  
beauty beamed.  
'T was a dream : the cruel waking flung him back  
upon the world.  
All his dream-built clouded castles were to endless  
ruin hurled.

He arose and cursed the slumber which had promised but to curse ;

Which had blessed him that the blessing might but make the doom the worse.

Better, truly ever better, never dream at all than dream

Happiness awhile to vanish like a lamp of midnight's gleam,

To go out and leave the darkness deeper, blacker than before,

All the light and beauty blotted from creation evermore.

Never, never sleep, or sleeping, never, never more awake ;

Let thy dreaming be forever ; let thy slumber never break—

Blessed forever—cursed forever—one or other let it be :

Sleep forever—wake forever—chained forever—ever free !

Passions mingled, hope and promise, disappointment, and despair !

Driven from the homes of human, hunted, hated everywhere.

This was hard, but not the hardest fortune of the bandit's fate :

Love is stronger than the strongest anarchy of wrath and hate.

Love will twine a wreath of flowers round a sinking human soul—

Hate and pride may storm and bluster ; love will  
hold the last control.

Sorrow is a deeper sorrow when affections are its  
spring.

'T is but to prolong the drifting that to floating  
reeds we cling :

'T is at best a desperation holding still to some-  
thing dear,

Wishing death when at a distance—shrinking it  
when it is near—

Looking back when all has vanished, looking for-  
ward to a void ;

Brooding over desolation whence all beauty is  
destroyed.

Such is love when lost or hopeless (little better  
when at best) ;

And the soul that never rested seeks in it a phantom  
rest—

Seeks and finds a very phantom, worse than all the  
phantom forms

That rush howling through the darkness of the  
spirit's passion-storms.

Mix with action when thine anguish is too great  
for thee to bear :

Mingle tumult with existence—flood thy life and  
drown thy care.

Do it not, and it were useless long to battle for thy  
life :

Sooner than be seared to silence, rush into the  
mighty strife

Of the ages. Join the revel and the riot of the  
hour ;  
Plunge into the ranks, and with them climb to  
Babel's highest tower.  
Climb ! 'T is true, the curse will strike thee : bet-  
ter it should strike thee there  
Than to come upon thee brooding in the desert of  
despair.

It was now the soft September. Summer days had  
passed away,  
And again beside the river sat the Maid of San José.  
Many a morning she had lingered in the shade of  
lindens fair,  
While her cheek was warm with kisses from the  
balmy southern air.  
At her feet the flowers were blooming, and their  
odor came and went  
Like the waves along the river stirring in their dis-  
content.  
Many a morn beside the river she had strolled  
amid the flowers,  
And had lingered till the coming of the noonday's  
deeper hours ;  
And before her ever passing, like a picture in a  
dream,  
Like a vision, like a memory, like the murmur of a  
stream,  
Was a form that long had vanished, but still seemed  
forever near—  
Turn where'er she would, before her ever would  
the form appear.

But that morning by the river he was sitting at her side.

He had come again to meet her, and to claim her for his bride ;

And the proud steed stood beside him in impatience and disdain,

Stamping, champing, in his ardor to be bounding o'er the plain.

But why linger here? Why linger anywhere? 'T is plain to know

All the rest, or almost all ; for, evermore, it hath been so.

Women liefer love a villain, only be he handsome, proud,

Than to love the truest manhood of the truest common crowd.

Villains sooner love a woman who is radiant and fair,

In a station far above them—sooner drag her to their lair—

Than of all the world beside ; and such a victim was the prey

Of the bandit when he whispered to the Maid of San José.

Hasten onward. It is useless thus to linger on the shore

Where she listened to him whispering his adventures o'er and o'er ;

Telling lies to hide the darkest ; clothing murder in a dress

That would make him seem a hero ; pleading sorrow and distress  
At the cruel persecutions that had been against him hurled,  
Marking him the vilest wretch that ever trod the righteous world ;  
Telling lowly in a whisper, soft as angels from above,  
How his very soul was dying for some kindred soul to love ;  
How his spirit yearned for kindness, and how kindness seemed to hush  
All the rage of pride and courage that at times would o'er him rush ;  
How none ever yet had loved him, and perhaps none ever would ;  
How he wished that he were worthy loving some one truly good ;  
But that he was too impetuous, and too rough through every part ;  
He could never gain affections, never win a woman's heart.

Hasten on ! 'T is vain to linger telling this recital o'er.

To the same it ever leadeth as it ever led before.  
Woman—peace to error ! Let us spare henceforward all but one ;  
'T were not just to lay before them all what but their worst hath done—  
'T were unjust to find the weakest and declare that all are weak.

Though the most deceive, yet some may truly think  
and truly speak.

Though their faith is as shadow ever changiug  
with the day,

Shadow of the quaking aspen where unrestful  
zephyrs play.

Yet it may be some are better ; some may hold a  
truer plan,

Some, perhaps, may shun a villain and yet love an  
honest man.

Maid of San José, 't is finished ! Thou hast  
promised him to fly

With him to a distant country, and for him to live  
and die.

Reason pleaded, but was silenced. Common-sense  
itself is vain

When it argues 'gainst affections. Tell the  
heathen that his fane

Is a stumbling-block of error, and he will as lief  
believe

As a woman will the warning that her lover will  
deceive.

The affections never hearken to the counsels of the  
wise ;

It is all in vain to argue. Better turn away thine eyes,  
And let ruin claim its victim, for 't is fated so to  
be—

Woman, thou hast linked thy fetters ! Death alone  
can set thee free !

Maid of San José, 't is finished. Thou art now his  
plighted bride ;

And for thee and thine 't were better hadst thou in  
thy childhood died.

It would be a tender mercy if thou couldst but  
perish now,

Ere the chill of living sorrow shall come o'er thy  
beauteous brow.

It would be a fond caressing if the hand of death  
were laid

On thine eyes this day, and send thee sleeping to  
thy dreamless shade.

There are hours of grief and sadness, and of sor-  
row and of gloom,

When the only mercy promised is the mercy of the  
tomb.

Even so for thee it will be. Thou canst not believe  
it yet ;

But the night will fall about thee, even ere the sun  
has set.

Hasten on and reach the final, reach the last, for it  
is near.

Listen not ; the words of promise are too low for  
thee to hear.

But her promise has been given ; and he says :  
“ Till death shall part,

I will love thee, I will bless thee, I will press thee  
to my heart.”

In a moment they were flying toward the hills that  
skirt the west,

Where the woods of fir and cedar fringe the moun-  
tain's even crest.

And the mighty night-black charger carried both,  
nor seemed to know  
That he carried aught, and swiftly sped as swiftest  
winds that blow ;  
Passing through the lines of linden that across the  
valley grew,  
Till the charger, sweeping grandly in the distance,  
passed from view.  
Then along the quiet valley at the deepness of the  
day,  
All was resting save the whisper of the winds from  
far away ;  
Save the pulse-like throb, the stirring of the leaves  
along the strand,  
In the balmy breath of breezes coming from the  
southern land ;  
Saving this, the deepest stillness, deepest silence  
rested there,  
And there seemed a voiceless sadness dreaming  
through the autumn air.

Who will close this fragment story ? Who will tell  
what is untold ?  
Who is there that knows the secrets which these  
western deserts hold ?  
None ! For no one e'er unraveled half the mys-  
teries of crime  
That surround the name of Vasques, fading now in  
flight of time.  
Glimpses vaguely seen and darkly, each a dash and  
nothing more,

Each within itself a mystery, are the drift of bandit  
lore.

Nothing certain, nothing worthy more than of a  
faint belief ;

Now an ecstasy of rapture, now a passion-burst of  
grief ;

Mingled all with din and darkness, the confusion of  
the past.

What was first in annal record, in recital may be  
last ;

And the last may be the first, and much in doubt is  
never told ;

What is new is made the newest, and unheeded is  
the old.

What of that ? It matters nothing. Though 't is  
told a thousand ways,

And is mixed with all the mystery of the deeds of  
ancient days,

Yet the final drift is certain—how the bandit and  
his bride

Perished in the awful midnight, out upon the  
desert wide ;

Perished, but 't was not together, each forsaken and  
alone,

'Mong the barren wastes, a hundred miles to south-  
ward from Tejon.

Yes, 't is brief, then hasten onward, for the end is  
swift and nigh.

Scarcely had the sun of morning touched the  
zenith of the sky ;

Scarcely had they reached the mountain, skirting  
through the western way,  
Shutting in the peaceful river and the plain of San  
José ;

Scarcely had the flying bandit passed those moun-  
tains with his bride,

When a troop of fleetest horsemen came across the  
valley wide.

They had trailed him from the cañons, and had  
tracked him to the strand

By the river, and they saw him riding toward the  
western land ;

And in swift pursuit they followed, shielding well  
themselves from view

By the random rows of linden which about the  
valley grew,

Till they saw him pass the summit, disappearing  
o'er the crest

Of the hills that border lowly all the margin of the  
west.

Then they rode with speed of whirlwind onward up  
the rocky race,

Leading to the mountain summit, in the fever heat  
of chase.

Even now they were discovered ; and the bandit  
southward turned ;

And his horse with pride and power, crag, and  
rock, and boulder spurned.

When she saw that the pursuers now the summit  
ridge had crossed :

"Are we lost?" the bride in anguish asked, imploring, "Are we lost?"

"Never, dearest; calmly trust me. Well I know what I can do—

Well I know my horse. 'T is useless that pursuer should pursue—

Canst thou see that beauteous mountain rising 'gainst the southern sky?

'T is our home, and we shall reach it ere the midnight passes by.

Turn thy gentle eyes from danger. Think not ruin follows near.

Trust me as thou wouldst be trusted by the one thou holdest dear."

Thus he spoke, and hid his anguish; for he knew not whence to turn;

On his cheek he felt the fever of despair and anger burn.

Dread and fearful were the chances for escape before him now.

Looking back, he saw, but spoke not. With his hand he held his brow,

While his horse was rushing onward tireless in the awful flight—

Still increasing speed as ever the pursuers burst in sight.

Ever and anon there sounded curse and yell from those who prest

Foremost on their panting coursers over ridge and mountain crest,

And from thence could see the bandit with his bride along the edge

Of some distant cliff, still fleeing over precipice  
and ledge—

Fleeing still with speed untiring, rushing through  
the jungle deep,

Where the thorny manzanita grows along the barren  
steep.

When their curses sounded nearer: "Are they  
nearer than before?"

She would ask, and he would answer: "No, and  
shall be nevermore."

Desperate chase! o'er plain and valley, overmountain,  
over hill;

Over gorge and over cañon, over river, over rill  
Hour on hour the summer evening, neither gained  
and neither lost;

While the one would cross the summit, even then  
the plain was crossed

By the other, gaining nothing, losing nothing; and  
the sun

Sank into the western shadows, and the autumn  
day was done.

Vasques hoped that with the darkness rest would  
come, and well it might;

Ever since the hour of mid-day had they fled in  
mortal flight;

And along the lone Salinas they were sweeping  
southward far,

From the river Nacimiento over barren drift and  
bar.

Sweeping on, and still behind him came athwart the  
deepening shade,

Hoof and spur and metal housings, clanging in the  
escapade.

Turning eastward, he eluded the pursuers for  
awhile ;

But again they pressed upon him in a dark and  
lone defile.

Fearful was the chase, and fearful was the rushing  
of the flight ;

Fearful was the sound of curses echoing through  
the depths of night.

Up the steep from ridge to summit, mounting ever  
higher, higher,

Swept they on. The rocks beneath them were a  
blazing path of fire.

Down again beyond the summit, plunged the bandit  
and his bride,

Where the rolling hills beyond them spread into  
the darkness wide.

“ I am faint—I fall—I perish ! Pain—my head is  
wild with pain !

Leave me—ended, all is ended—leave me—fly into  
the plain

And escape—” Her accents faltered, and she now  
was sinking fast—

Vasques wheeled into a cañon—the pursuers gal-  
loped past.

She was fainting—she was falling. Now uncon-  
scious on the ground.

Vasques wheeled away a moment—startled by the  
nearer bound  
Of returning horse. Already came the clang of  
panting steed—  
Vasques plunged into the darkness with a wild and  
reckless speed,  
Saying : “ I will lead them onward for a moment,  
and will glide  
From their sight, deceive, delude them, and return  
unto my bride.”  
This he muttered in confusion as he fled across the  
height,  
For a moment disappearing from the hearing and  
the sight.  
But the clang of hoofs beyond them told them  
plainly whence he fled ;  
And with yell of triumph rushed they onward o’er  
the path he led.  
Turned he often to elude them ; turned to left and  
turned to right,  
Thus to foil and to deceive them in the darkness of  
the night.  
But they ever pressed the harder, coming nearer  
and more near,  
Till their hoarsely panting horses just behind him  
he could hear.

Where the oaks with giant branches like the eastern  
banyan trees,  
Sway in dark and sullen grandeur on the heavy  
midnight breeze ;

Where the earth is dank and deadly, and its poison  
reek distills  
O'er the marshy plains extending out beyond the  
Idria Hills ;  
There at midnight closed the battle for his life, and  
Vasques fell,  
Beaten down and overpowered, while around him  
rose the yell  
Of their triumph, when his foemen saw that he  
could rise no more ;  
And that he at last had yielded, and defiance now  
was o'er.  
Deadly was the last encounter. Fearful was the foe-  
men's cost ;  
It for them were doubly better if the battle they  
had lost.  
Better had they wheeled and left him when he  
fiercely turned at bay :  
They who perished in the fight were more than  
those who saw the day  
Dawning on the morrow. Dying round him groaned  
the fallen foe—  
Some were cursing, some were praying, some in  
death were lying low.  
Fearful was the scene. The darkness hid the worst  
and fiercest fight—  
Deep among the reeds and rushes hidden ever  
from the light.  
  
It was over. Few and haggard were the foemen  
left to tell

To the world the awful story how the bandit  
Vasques fell.

But he perished. Then the night wind came and  
passed, and all was still ;

And the morning late and lonely dawned along the  
eastern hill.

And the morning late and lonely gleamed along the  
barren steep,

Where the bandit's bride was lying like one dream-  
ing, fast asleep.

'T was the sleep that never waketh. Life had  
slowly ebbd away,

And her brow was cold as marble ere the dawning  
of the day.

Peace ! Her waywardness was over. Heaven's  
mercy can forgive

Those who blindly love and perish, those who  
blindly love and live.

## SEÑORITAS.\*

*SEÑORITAS del Los Critas,*  
'T is in vain we would forget  
How you sweetly smiling greet us,  
Though we are as strangers yet.

Memory will turn forever  
From the hours that time shall bring,  
And from you shall never sever  
In the year's eternal spring.

Gladly would we linger near you  
And no longer wander o'er  
Lands and seas, but love you, cheer you  
In the world's forevermore.

\*These verses were written one Sunday morning on River Los Critas, forty miles north from Santa Barbara. I imagined I could write in Spanish, and the original was supposed to be in that language, and was addressed to some Spanish young ladies whom I met that morning. But, when I submitted the verses to a Spaniard for his approval, he looked over them and remarked that he could read English very little, but thought the verses good. I explained that they were Spanish. He shook his head. I took the hint, and made no further attempt at Spanish. This is the translation. The original for the first line (incorrect) is retained.

H. M.

*Señoritas del Los Critas,*

In the hours through days to be,  
Meet us, in remembrance meet us,  
Though we roam o'er land and sea.

In your mountain homes remember,  
When the wild alfalfas bloom  
In the long and bright December,  
That there is a land of gloom—

Country gloomy toward the rising  
Of the sun, and we are there,  
But are fondly realizing  
Vistas from your country fair.

When the azure o'er your mountains  
Bends in brightness high above,  
And the fells and fairy fountains  
Whisper like a sigh of love ;

When the vines are climbing, twining  
O'er your homes of lattice walls,  
And the quail with plumage shining  
In the forest calls and calls ;

When the breezes from the ocean  
Come through Gaviota Pass,  
Stirring with a restless motion  
Blossoms, leaves, and blooming grass—

Then remember those who never  
Will forget you, though afar,

And away from you forever  
Toward the rising morning star.

Then remember—not with sorrow—  
Then remember—nor forget—  
Happy be to-day—to-morrow  
You will be more happy yet.

Dull regret shall never chide you ;  
Everywhere shall be delight :  
Hours of summer sheen shall hide you  
From the shadows of the night.

True as in the sky above you,  
Firm as earth beneath your feet,  
Hearts shall ever be that love you  
Till in death they cease to beat.

*Señoritas del Los Critas*

*Á Dios*, a long adieu ;  
Meet us, in remembrance meet us,  
We shall e'er remember you.

## A TRANSLATION.\*

## ORIGINAL.

**K**EKER miren náne,  
Warwar páser  
Yamne krouekan.  
Coope nárer mi  
Koolkun i doukser.  
Dear máne kuker  
Cle wol proue  
I sabbeane wal  
Moonter moppara.  
Keker misére  
Yapte winegan.  
Koker sombolo  
Barnar lippun,  
Lippun, lippunke,  
Koolunker punater  
Bin biwegan  
Coope nárer tánes  
I doukser. Coope  
Nárer mi koolkun  
I doukser.

\* From the language of the Mosquito Indians.

## TRANSLATION.

Darling mine, sweet mine, we sever.

I am going far from thee.

Must this parting be forever ?

Shall we stroll beside the sea

Any more ? The sea breeze blowing

Soft I feel upon my brow ;

And I see the lightning glowing

On the distant mountain now ;

And the verdant valleys under

All the hills are gleaming bright,

Lit by lightning, while the thunder,

Dull and mournful, blends with night.

And, alas ! thou art not near me,

And my soul is sad and lone !

Fare thee well. Thou canst not hear me—

All my joy and bliss are flown.

## THE BURNING RIVER.

'T IS strange and beautiful, the ancient song  
Which singeth how the Omec kingdom fell.  
The dream of legends and the mystic throng  
Of fantasies the train of memory swell.  
And he who waits to list is swept along,  
Entranced as by a weird and magic spell ;  
And deep into the past alone we know  
The annals of the storied long ago.

Allow me this, and I will ask no more.  
Indulge an idle fancy for a while,  
And I 'll believe a page of heathen lore  
Whose strangeness has a power to beguile.  
'T is but a superstition from the yore—  
A broken column from an ancient pile  
Of Omec masonry—a shattered wall  
Which fell and in its ruin buried all.

In years untold, when first the tide of time  
Was washing gently on the farthest strand  
Of infant earth, and waves with playful chime  
Sent music inward toward the smiling land,  
And sunlight shone along the changeless clime,  
O'er plains that reached afar serene and bland,  
Where winter never chilled the summer's love  
Raptured by beauty beaming from above—

In that far day from Strait of Carquinez—

But ere the Golden Gate was burst ajar—

To eastward, where the south wind's balmy breath

Came softly, stretched an upland wide and far.

There loomed not then those pinnacles of death,

Kaweah, Lyell, Whitney, Shasta, nor

That range of snowy peaks and granite hills

Which now the east horizon's vista fills.

From out the north, a thousand miles away,

There flowed a river, beautiful and deep,

Along this plain ; and bright the light of day

Across the water gleamed or sank to sleep

Beneath the verdant banks where shadows lay

Upon the tide, forevermore to keep

A trembling quiver there, and evermore

To rest in music wafted from the shore.

For strains of rapturous cadence ever rose

From out the shadows, mingling with the song

Of myriad birds, with plumage like the snows

And skies and sunsets where the gloamings  
throng

Across the Alpine summits, and disclose

All colors of the earth. And swept along

Was all this music on the morn-deep air,

And upward rose to heaven like a prayer.

Nor was this all. The vines from branches high

Hung pendent ; and the zephyrs on them played

Soft airs like harps Æolian, passing by

From shadow unto shadow, shade to shade.

And music sweet and lowly, like a sigh  
Of love, each quaver of the wind obeyed,  
And rose and fell, now near, and far away,  
And near again with low and plaintive lay.

'T was like a vision from the spirit land  
Where what is real scarcely seemeth so ;  
Where realms utopian rest on every hand,  
And dreams and vistas ever come and go  
On deep pulsations down from ether's strand,  
Whose brightness and whose deepness bendeth  
low ;  
And yearnings in their vague and weary quest  
Are calmed at last and lulled into a rest.

In that far country dwelt the Omec race,  
To whom the blight of sin was all unknown.  
Whate'er was loveliest in every grace  
They claimed and held in gladness as their own.  
Throughout their land in every quiet place  
Their snow-white villages in sunlight shone.  
The valleys waved with flowers, the vales were  
green,  
And azure heavens bent above the scene.

Beyond the river on the farther side  
A mountain rose of stone as white as snow,  
Streaked with the purest gold in veins that vied  
With El Doradoes of the long ago.  
From base to summit, branching far and wide  
The burnished strata shone with dazzling glow

Against the chalk-white cliffs whereon the light  
Of noonday's sun poured beautiful and bright.

There was an edict in that ancient land,  
The last and only edict ever there :  
That none should cross the river to the strand  
That lay beyond—anear the mountain fair.  
And them who disobeyed, no mortal hand  
Could rescue from the ruin and despair  
Which would o'erwhelm as by a poison blight  
Blown from the nether realms of endless night.

For ages and for ages all obeyed,  
Nor yearned to cross the river, but at last  
Two sat together in the linden shade,  
And toward the Mount of Gold their eyes they  
cast.  
And on that self-same day a bark they made,  
And quickly o'er the crystal tide they past,  
Lured onward by a strange mysterious dream  
Across the waves of that forbidden stream.

The bark had past but midway o'er the tide,  
When—like a flash—the flood was changed to  
fire—  
A rolling mass of flames from side to side  
With billows mounting higher and higher and  
higher.  
The crew with cry of torment sank and died,  
Like Buddha mourners on a funeral pyre.  
And waves closed over. All was stilled and hushed,  
Save cataracts of fire that hissed and rushed.

The Mount of Gold, beyond the farther shore,  
Now molten swept adown the burning stream  
And mingled with the waves its shining ore  
Till all together as one deluge seem,  
And onward sweep with hissing and with roar,  
And overflow the plains with glare and gleam,  
And seas of surging fire on every hand  
Have deluged all the valleys of the land.

This was the Omec kingdom's overthrow.  
The tribes had perished, or had rushed in flight,  
And fled amazed from ruin, death and woe,  
And left their country seething in its blight  
Of fire, and fled to plains of Mexico  
That stretched afar beyond the southern night ;  
And on the upland east from Carquinez  
All loveliness was burnt and seared to death.

A change stupendous followed in the wake  
Of the destroying fire, and plowed the plains  
In cañons and abysses ; and the quake  
Of earth betrayed its anguish and its pains.  
Deep valleys sank, and many a fiery lake ;  
And burning glaciers left their red moraines  
Leagues out against the north in flaming drifts,  
Strewn random far between the yawning rifts.

Where late had stood the Mount of Gold, arose  
A range of granite peaks in dark array,  
Uplifting to the sky their crowns of snows,  
And bending northward, southward far away.

No longer now the burning river flows :  
It hath grown cold—a cold basaltic gray—  
A plain of warping rocks with many a seam—  
To mark the riftings of the lava stream.

Long ages now have past and brought their change  
Upon the landscape ; and now rises high  
Against the east, Sierra's Snowy Range  
With summits bathing in the summer sky.  
The Omec story is a wild and strange  
And beautiful conceit, that passes by  
As something wholly false. Be not deceived :  
A thing may yet be true, though unbelieved.

Pass thou to east and south from Suisun  
And cross the foothills spurring to the west,  
And thou wilt find along the ridges strewn  
A hard, volcanic rock, the crowning crest  
Of promontories now, and many a dune  
Of rocks in mighty drifts, with thickets dressed—  
All this debris from out that ancient tide  
Was scattered o'er the landscape far and wide.

Deep in the drifts of earth thou canst behold  
The wealth of ancient days, where, torn away,  
The Golden Mount has left its sands of gold  
Strewn leagues along the south, where thickly lay  
The rocks auriferous with wealth untold,  
To rest until the rush of modern day  
Shall delve into the depths, and turning o'er  
The sands shall find the treasures of yore.

Yea, more. Thou yet canst trace the mighty bed  
Of that vast river, fathoms deep and more.  
The channel banks are filled with rubbish dead  
And one might see them not, though passing o'er.  
A thousand miles to northward was its head ;  
It emptied toward the Nicaragua shore.  
A stream sublime and grand in ancient years,  
But now its ruined path alone appears.

But thou canst plainly trace the course of fire  
That deluged o'er the channels of the tide ;  
That rose with molten mountains higher and higher,  
And overflowed the regions far and wide.  
Thou canst behold it, too, how in their ire  
Convulsions of the earth from side to side  
Have rent the strata which the lava left  
With many a rift and deep abysmal cleft.

Then strange and beautiful the Omec song  
Which sang their ancient kingdom's overthrow,  
That land where was no sin or thought of wrong,  
Whose races knew not grief that others know,  
Where all was happiness through ages long,  
Till avarice brought down its flood of woe.  
And all was sealed—the fair dominion's doom ;  
And all was buried in a burning tomb.

## THE CONQUEST.

WHEN you were alone this even,  
Ada May,  
Did you hear the soft winds whisper  
In their play ?  
Did you hear them sighing, sighing,  
O'er the withered roses lying  
Where the butterflies were flying  
All the day ?

Zephyrs worship you and love you  
More and more,  
As you pass, the flowers are bending  
To adore.  
Bluest blossoms bow before you,  
Orange blossoms quiver o'er you,  
Plead to kiss you and adore you  
Evermore.

Truly you will not be cruel,  
Ada May ?  
You will let me hear you singing  
Far away ?  
You 'll not frown when I come nearer  
So that I can hear you clearer,  
If I 'm quiet, dear and dearer  
Ada May ?

Ah, I knew you would not chide me,  
For you know  
That I came to hear you singing  
Soft and low.  
And I came to sit beside you  
Where the manzanitas hide you,  
And the breezes sweetly chide you  
As they blow.

Velvet fig-leaves cluster o'er us,  
Ada May ;  
Cute blue quails are peeping at us  
In their play ;  
And about us shadows shiver,  
Blossoms o'er us quake and quiver  
Like the sunlight on a river  
Far away.

---

## SANTA CRUZ.

## PART FIRST.

'T WAS a bright, bright morn, and the sea was  
bright,  
And the winds were soft as a prayer.  
From the tranquil harbor a sail of white  
Stood out to sea, and glided light  
To the south, like an uncaged bird of flight  
As it breaks away from its prison night,  
Till the sail of white like a fairy sprite  
Was wafted along and passed from sight  
On the wings of the balmy air.

The boat bore two who were blest supreme  
In all that there is of bliss.  
From the Shadow Land there came no dream  
That woe would come ; and the morning's gleam  
Was not more bright than the dream and theme  
Of their thoughts and words, for they did not  
deem  
That things are never as they seem  
In a world as false as this.

They were blest supreme—these loving two—  
As they sailed from the City of Flowers  
With hearts, so glad that no one knew  
How glad they were. Then the sky was blue  
High over them ; and the ocean's hue  
Was heaven's mirror, clear and true :  
But the hills their shadows seaward threw,  
Gloom dark as the raven's wings that flew  
O'er Jelead's ruined towers.

The boat swept south with bending mast,  
For the winds were rising well.  
The lighthouse tower from vision past,  
And the winds swelled to a driving blast,  
While the mists were gathering thick and fast  
On Sierra De San Rafael.

From the southern sea the cliffs of gray  
Arose, and the bark still bore  
To the south. And the light of the autumn day  
Grew dim, and the winds in fiercer play  
Caught the silver sails, and dashed the spray ;

And the white caps rose ; and the mists away  
In the south on the ocean thicker lay  
And covered the Island Shore.

## PART SECOND.

'T was a dark, dark night, and the wild wind blew  
O'er the rocks of the dreary islands ;  
And over the reefs to leeward flew  
The foam of the floods that were bursting through  
The clefts in the cliffs where the cactus grew,  
And the lightnings played on the highlands.

A voice was heard in the roar of the waves,  
And then all but the storm was still.  
Was it the whistling winds through the caves  
Of the crags above, where the whirlwind raves ?  
Or the cry of a startled bird that braves  
The depths of the night as it blindly laves  
The dark in its flight to the hill ?

The fisherman listened, but could not tell,  
For he heard the voice no more.  
But the roaring tempest grew more fell  
With a rage that naught of earth could quell,  
With surge on surge and swell on swell  
That burst o'er the rocks with a wild farewell,  
As the fierce floods buried the shore.

'T was a dark, dark night, and the sea was dark,  
And nothing but night was seen,  
Till a flash of light—'t was a lightning spark  
From a burning cloud—lit up the dark,

And the fisherman saw a stranded bark,  
The cliffs and reefs between.

And he saw there two who were floating away  
On the crest of a sweeping wave.  
They were young—these two—and they had been  
gay  
When the morning broke of that fatal day ;  
But 't was over now ; and the driving spray  
Was flung on high against the gray  
Of the rocks where the tempests rave.

And the fisherman saw as the vivid streak  
Of the lightning flashed under a cloud,  
They were dead—these two—for they did not  
speak,  
And their lips moved not, as cheek to cheek  
In a last embrace that death made weak,  
They drifted off ; and the wind blew bleak  
On the face of her who was mild and meek,  
And in his who was brave and proud.

And then all was dark, and all was o'er  
On the coast where the tempest strews  
The wreck of storms ; and the billows roar  
On the rocks and reefs that guard the shore ;  
And the gray cliffs rise, and the white birds soar ;  
And the floods through rifted headlands pour,  
And the dark mists hover evermore  
Round the Isle of Santa Cruz.

## AVERNAL.

'T WAS midnight in the Pass of Avernall,  
And o'er the lifeless hills the moonlight fell  
In deathly pallor, like it were afraid,  
And at each shadow seemed to hesitate  
As though it fancied ghosts were lurking there.

'T was midnight ; and aweary I lay down  
Among the rocks to sleep ; my bed the sand  
Whereon the sun the livelong summer day  
Had poured his fiery anger ; and at night  
The hot winds from Tejon came like a plague.

'T was night. But from my eminence I saw  
And traced the cañon's tortuous course afar,  
Marked by the few dwarfed cottonwoods that grew  
Along the yawning brink, where we had sought  
Since evenfall for water, but in vain.  
Still further in the east a plain outspread,  
Scarce visible, and vague, and seemed to reach  
Beyond the world and out through boundless space.  
I turned and looked to westward through the night.  
The moonlight shone more brightly far adown  
That landscape, sloping off to meet the sea,  
Where in soft silence and serene repose  
Slept in their beauty the Obispo hills

Low bordering on the river brook Estrelle.  
 I was between the desert and the land  
 Of summer blown. To east were wastes of dust,  
 And solitudes ; to west were verdant hills.  
 To left and right the mountains pierced the sky.  
 Fierce peaks uplooming there like mighty spires  
 Half burnt by conflagrations, and in ruin,  
 Seen through the smoke and mist that hovered still,  
 Were scathed and cindered by a million storms  
 Of fire and whirlwind, like the Tishbite saw  
 On Horeb \* \* \* \* \*

I could have slept had there not come to me  
 The memory of a legend I had heard  
 The miners tell one night beside their fire.  
 'T was of the Pass of Avernall, and how  
 A bandit's beauteous bride once perished here.

A rose may love tornadoes to its death  
 And ruin. Even so it was with her.  
 She loved, she truly loved, but 't was unwise  
 To love at all, a man like him. Her love  
 Was that of a true woman—rash perhaps ;  
 But still devotion all, and faithful. Such,  
 The poet sings, as vines that twine around  
 The oak, clinging for aid and strength and life,  
 And in return bestowing love and trust.  
 Like such a vine she clung to him. But oaks  
 Must fall ; and sad if in their overthrow  
 They carry down to ruin tender vines  
 And all together perish on the earth.

The bandit won her by a stratagem.  
She thought she knew him, but his crimes were hid  
And all his desperate career he kept  
A secret from her ; and she looked on him  
As one whom woman's heart should trust and love  
Through sunshine and through shadows, calm and  
storm.

Poor erring girl ! Had heaven angels none  
That none were sent to whisper, " Be aware ! "  
And save her ere it was too late to save ?

She loved the noble man—as such she thought him—  
Who rode adown the valley near the door  
Of her own home beneath the linden trees  
That waved along the plains of San José ;  
And she was wedded to him.

Swift there came  
A change across the spirit of her dream.  
Her lover was an outlaw from the south,  
Flying from justice ; and pursuit came fast,  
Till with one sunset from her wedding day,  
She saw him disappear in desperate flight,  
To save himself, among the southern hills.  
She sought him—true to love, but false to life—  
And found him far among the barren lands,  
Concealed in the deep Pass of Avernall.

He told her of his ruin—truth too late—  
And begged her to return to her own home,  
Nor think, nor speak, nor dream again of him

Who was unworthy of her trust and love.  
But no. She would not leave him. Nevermore  
Be separated from him, but would love him  
Till death should come, and after that—forever.

Death came full soon. That night a clang of hoofs  
Rang out upon the air ; and for his life  
The bandit fled the rocks among, for life  
O'er barren hills, across the desert plains  
That stretched dead wastes toward Wild Flower  
and Le Moore.

He came no more. Among the groves that face  
The Idria Hills, where oaks with giant limbs  
Swayed in the wind and brushed the marshy earth,  
That night in combat desperate he fell,  
O'ertaken and o'erpowered by pursuers.

Through all that long and dreary, dreary night  
His bride looked for his coming, but there came  
No one to breathe her name. 'T was silence all.  
The hot winds from Tejon blew on till morn ;  
But he came not. All day she watched and waited.  
Her blue eyes sought his coming, but in vain.  
The bleak, parched desert stretched before her far,  
All desolate and lifeless. On her face  
The look of deep anxiety grew deeper  
With fall of eventide ; and night came down  
With mercy none and pity none for her.

When morning dawned, she lay as one who slept,  
But she was dead. Her sweet and palid face

In silence rested on the snow white sands,  
Not whiter than her brow ; and her blue eyes  
Were closed forever.

In the Avernus

'T was midnight, and I watched the starlit hills  
That rose in vagueness round me, and to me  
My memory whispered of the bandit's bride ;  
While my companions near me slumbered on  
And all unconscious dreamed the night away.

---

### THE BOURNE.

ON a far-off shore where the light is bright,  
And as calm as a seraph's prayer,  
Where the soft dews cluster on lilies white,  
Serene and still in the silent night,  
Is the home of Mabel Saint Clair.

'T is a sunny shore and a crystal strand,  
And the river softly flows,  
Where the waves are washing the silver sand  
And the blooming groves afar expand—  
As are seen in the dreams of fairyland  
Which none but the dreamer knows.

'T is a beautiful bourne, that far away shore ;  
And again I seem to be there,  
Where the cold of the winter days is o'er,  
And the storms and tempests cease to roar,  
And the flowers are blooming evermore  
By the home of Mabel Saint Clair.

## THE PHANTOM LAKE.

SAN DIEGO'S fiery desert stretching westward  
from the strand  
Of that silent, deathlike river bordering on the  
burning sand—  
River like that Stygian river sung in songs of  
mythic eld,  
Separating bournes of beauty from the realms that  
darkness held—  
San Diego's desert stretches westward from that  
river tide,  
Reaching in its desolation out in ruin, waste and  
wide.

To that desert cometh never zephyr laden with the  
bloom  
Of San Bernardino's gardens out beyond the hills of  
gloom.  
Summer winds that softly whisper through the  
blossoms of the trees,  
Waving in eternal freshness over all Los Angeles,  
Come not there ; but every tempest is a furnace  
and a fire,  
Withering, scorching, scathing, burning, racked  
with vengeance and with ire.

They who wander through that desert see a lake  
    outspreading fair,  
Beautiful and placid, resting like a cloud upon the  
    air ;  
And along its shores of silver waves are washing  
    o'er the sand,  
Gently as the sunlit rippings play on Titicaca's  
    strand ;  
And beside the crystal waters, bending gracefully  
    and low,  
Forest-arbors of green cedars wave in silence to  
    and fro.

Far away in cloudless distance snowy peaks of  
    mountains rise  
From the dulness of the desert 'gainst the azure of  
    the skies ;  
While the sunlight flashes, dazzles from the crests  
    of spotless white,  
Burnishing with shining silver every pinnacle of  
    light,  
And transforming and translating into fineness  
    every form,  
Touching with a quietness the sweeping of the dis-  
    tant storm.

In the phantom lake the pictures of the snowy  
    mountains rest,  
Every rock and crag and summit in translucent  
    beauty dressed.  
He who looks at it believes not that 't is all delu-  
    sive show,

That there is no lake to limn the distant mountains  
    clad in snow ;  
That 't is all mirage, and cruel ; that the trees and  
    tide and strand  
Are but phantoms false and fleeting, hanging o'er  
    the shimmering sand.  
And if but a cloud of summer shade it from the  
    noonday gleam,  
Lake, and waves, and trees, and mountains fade  
    and vanish like a dream.

But the one who sees believes not that 't will fade ;  
    and o'er the waste  
Of the landscape on he presses, on in useless,  
    hopeless haste,  
To be first upon the margin of the lake, beneath  
    the trees,—  
There to bathe his burning temples in the freshness  
    of the breeze,  
Which he knows must ever wander over such a  
    verdant shore,  
Blowing blandly where the flowers blush and  
    bloom forevermore.

Wanderer, better turn forever from the phantom  
    trees and strand !  
Turn ! The false mirage is looming o'er the lone  
    and lurid land !  
Better turn thee to the mountains ; nor look back,  
    nor think, nor grieve  
For the beauty that allured thee—it will vanish ere  
    the eve :

Fade away and leave thee seeking, leave thee wandering on in vain,  
Leave thee crushed with disappointment on the drear and voiceless plain.

But the one who saw believed not ; and he hastened through the gleam  
Toward the Armidian Garden, like a deep enchanted dream.  
But it fled before his coming, seemed as far as at the first,  
Flying still, he still pursuing where none other ever durst,—  
Deep into the dying desert, far where never human tread  
Had the way before him measured, where creation slumbered dead.

Then the sun, with plunge of madness, rushed adown the burning west,  
And the wanderer looked about him for the fields in summer dressed.  
All were gone. The lake had vanished. Round about him naught was left  
Save the parched and lurid landscape, shrivelled, rent with rift and cleft  
By the withering winds for ages—dunes of dust and driven drifts  
From horizon to horizon, where the snowy mountain lifts  
Up aloft its mocking boldness, looking down with sullen scorn

On the desert where the Phantom Lake had hovered  
at the morn.

So I found it. Thou wilt find it when thou turnest  
to the west

From the weariness of Yuma, on the promontory  
crest.

Thou wilt find it so ; and dreary will the waste be-  
fore thee run

Down the burning desolation, in the anger of the  
sun.

Thou wilt feel a vague oppression weighing on thee  
like a dream

Of the heavy midnight sadness. Thou wilt feel a  
sadder theme

Steal across thy musings dimly, when thou look on  
nature dead—

Beauty passed away forever, desolation left instead.

But speak not, for it were idle that the world should  
ever know

What thou feelest in thy sadness—it hath scorned  
thee long ago.

It is idle thus to liken all the desert and the shore,  
Whence the pride and hope and promise have de-  
parted evermore,

And where now the false mirages loom their bright-  
ness for awhile

Only to delude thee, crush thee, mock thee, scorn  
thee, and beguile,—

Then to vanish in the shadows, harbingers of com-  
ing night,

And to curse thee with the phantom of a beautiful  
delight—

'T is in vain that thou shouldst liken all of this to  
blighted life,

With its promises in ruins, nothing left but bitter  
strife ;

With its fondest hopes derided ; all that it had ever  
known

Trampled down to degradation ere the happy  
dream hath flown—

Dream remaining ! All departed save alone the  
fatal part,

(False but beautiful) the fancies of a sympathizing  
heart.

Say not that the false mirages hovering o'er the  
desert dead

Are the same as dreams that hover over life when  
hope has fled—

Coming softly, gently stealing, coming whence none  
ever know,

Resting in their silent beauty o'er the ruin and the  
woe.

Dreams are but the dim mirages rising 'bove a  
stranded soul,

Fleeting fair in their concealing of the far and  
stormy goal.

They are but a borrowed brightness, the mirages  
and the dreams—

They are paintings on the shadows, drapery of  
sadder themes.

'The mirages hide the desert with its dreariness of  
death ;  
Dreams conceal that deeper sorrow word of mortal  
never saith.

But why thus forever liken all that nature hath of  
gloom  
To the gloom of souls despairing when have faded  
every bloom  
From our destiny and passions ? Let it pass, and  
think no more  
Of the solitude of deserts that mirages hover o'er.  
Brush from memory every vestige of the bliss of  
earlier days,  
For remembrance is a sorrow to bewilder and to  
craze ;  
And the mind is but bewildered that will brood on  
what is past,  
When instead of consolation desperation comes at  
last.  
At the best 't is nothing better than to stand among  
the snows,  
Thinking of the dead volcano resting now from  
burning throes ;  
At thy feet the icy crater, stilled forever now, and  
cold,  
Where the fires of ancient ages in their mighty bil-  
lows rolled.  
Calmed at last is all the tempest, all the fervor and  
the fire ;  
Calmed at last the heart's emotion, all its passion  
and desire.

Calmed the tumult and the surging of the seas of  
molten flame ;

Calmed the spirit's grief and anguish, sorrow and  
submissive shame.

Snows are resting where the burning summits held  
their ancient reign ;

In the heart is winter coldness—better ice than  
burning pain.

Better coldness than the fever of the passion and  
the thirst ;

Better not to be than, being, live to feel thyself  
accurst.

Better death beyond the power of the resurrection  
light,

Than existence, though eternal, in the depths of  
endless night ;

Better solitude and silence, deep and nevermore to  
break,

Than the gibbering of spectres when from dream-  
ing we awake.

Cost of peace thou shouldst not reckon. It is bet-  
ter to be free

At the cost of conscious being, than in servitude  
to be.

Brush away the spectre phantoms, the delusions  
brush away ;

Let the desert, dead and dreary, meet again the  
light of day.

Brush away the idle dreaming that conceals thy  
deeper life.

Face to face confront the ages in their tumult and  
their strife.  
Hurl thy vengeance on oppression, tear away the  
fetter chains,  
Bring to life the withered flowers dying on the  
desert plains ;  
Cool the fever of thy passions, quench the hidden  
smouldering fire  
That hath made thy deep existence, thy emotions'  
funeral pyre.  
Strike the fools and phantom devils that will noth-  
ing do but curse  
And proclaim thy love a failure—hell containeth  
nothing worse,—  
Strike them in the face, and turning, leave the  
dark and downward way,  
And upon the higher summits seek the light of  
brighter day ;  
Then below thee and beneath thee look on mys-  
tery and gloom,  
And about thee and above thee look on fields of  
fadeless bloom.  
In the dark and depths beneath thee, the mirage  
thou canst behold ;  
But it looms above the falseness and the shadows  
of the old—  
While about thee and above thee all is beautiful  
and new,  
Nothing false and nothing fading, all reality and true.  
Then rebel against the shadows, and in life be  
something more  
Than a shadow 'mong the shadows on a silent  
shadow shore.

## CALIFORNIA.

FAIR western realm that borders on the sea,  
Kissed by the sun's last ray at eventide,  
Full many a true, true heart has beat for thee,  
Adored and loved thee with devoted pride.

I too, although a stranger on thy shore,  
Would claim thee for a season as my own ;  
Thou dreamlike country, radiant evermore,  
No sun on fairer land has ever shone.

And I have loved thy valleys calm and still ;  
I've roamed at random o'er thy boundless plains ;  
I've lingered long on many and many a hill,  
Where nature sleeps in peace and silence reigns.

Thy snow-white mountains rising to the sky  
Have thronged my spirit with submissive dread,  
Thrilled with the panorama wild and high,  
Among creation's tombs of mighty dead.

And I have rested, there above the clouds,  
On rocky crags wrapped in eternal snow,  
While mists like sailing ships with silver shrouds  
Swept white and wonderful afar below.

I've loved thy storms at times ; for in the hour  
Of tempests and tornadoes I can feel  
A grandeur in the gloom of darkest power,  
When thoughts rush forth too mighty to conceal.

Then, land of rapture, fairer and more bright  
Than other realms of earth, I came to thee,  
And loved thee, left thee, but thy summer light  
Will beam in splendor evermore for me.

---

### THE SEA-GIRT ISLE.

THE night was beautiful. No dream so calm  
And tranquil ever soothed with balmy breath  
The soul that sinks in sleep when toil is o'er.

I stood alone on that volcanic isle.  
'T was like a vision round me everywhere—  
Beneath my feet the scoria and burnt rocks  
Were cindered crisp, the skeleton of fires  
Whose wrath had ceased its raging long ago.

The cliffs above me hung with saffron bloom  
Of cactus tropical ; and deathless plants  
Clung blossoming from every niche and shelf  
Of fire-distorted crags, cold now and dead ;  
And at my feet extended far the tides  
That sweep forever o'er the wide Pacific.

The night was beautiful. A silence slept  
Serenely over all the world of waves,

Save ever and anon the roar and moan  
Of billows on the reef, or the wild cry  
Of sea-birds screaming through the startled night ;  
Or the hoarse howl and bay of ocean dogs  
That swam from rock to rock. But all this passed  
And came at intervals ; and night hung dull  
About the island hills.

I was alone,  
Save over me a dim-seen star or two,  
The elements around me and beneath.  
The low, sad moaning of the distant waves  
Dashing remorseless on remorseless shores,  
And, wrecked and broken, sobbing life away,  
Seemed to me whispers of the human voice,  
Recalling from the past, forgotten days,  
And hours of happiness that are no more.

My memory flew away and lost itself  
Amid the shades of springtime's blooming trees,  
In realms not beat by oceans and rough waves.  
*She* met me there. The eventime was still.  
Her eyes surpassed in blueness all the skies  
That arch the vernal vales of Guayaquil,  
And rest enmirrored where the river rests.  
She met me, knew me, smiled and passed away,  
And waking as from dreams, I was again  
Alone upon that sea-girt isle.

The voice  
Of waves forgot the gentler themes, and mocked  
At me, upbraided me with jeers and scorn

For being human, not inanimate.  
The weakness of mankind was cast at me  
With taunts and cold derision ; and the waves  
That have no souls, and rave at forms that have,  
Beat wilder still upon the sounding shores ;  
And ghostlier still their hollow voices spoke.  
I felt the truth of all their utterances—  
What myriad millions of the human race,  
Formed in the mold and likeness of their God,  
Live like the soulless rocks beneath their feet.  
They hear the thunder while the clouds are dark,  
But in the calmness of the aftertime,  
They reckon not that more pure the air has grown.  
No storms of noble passion ever sweep  
Across their destiny to end in calm,  
Through which the spirit's whisperings are heard :  
“There 's nothing great on earth but victory ;  
There 's nothing noble ever gained unsought ;  
There 's nothing good that is not pure and true ;  
There 's nothing pure and true but hope and love.”

What millions of the race of men, to whom  
Life is but living, and the world but earth,—  
Nothing above and nothing more beyond !  
To them there is no deep sublimity  
On earth, and in themselves is worse than none !  
They live, but care not that they live for aught !  
They will not hearken to the still, small voice  
That is not in the whirlwind or the fire,  
But comes in calmness after. The Hand Divine  
In wide creation is through all its works  
To them a mystery, a hidden book.

The waves still sobbed and moaned beneath the  
cliffs,  
And all the night was beautiful to me.  
I felt a gentleness by nature given  
Come softly over me. My wayward thoughts  
That had been wandering beyond the seas,  
Came lightly back, unfraught by grief or care ;  
And tempests that had tost me in their rage  
Had passed away. The night was beautiful.  
I laid me down beneath the laurelled rocks,  
And heeded not the sea that roared and roared,—  
And o'er me came the soothing rest of sleep,  
And all was calmed and hushed at last.

When morning came, the sunshine kindly fell  
O'er all the island coast, and gleamed across  
A restless sea. The waves broke on the rocks,  
And o'er them was a mist of milk-white spray,  
And on its crest the fitful rainbows played.  
The voice of chiding ceased to chide me now—  
It seemed a token that I was forgiven  
For all my restless waywardness.

#### The arch

Of seven hues danced in the shining spray,  
That hid the wreck of waves beneath. The light  
That breaks upon the storm-tost soul, so gleams  
And hides the wrecks, and turns all rage to calm,  
And builds in beauty from the shattered past,  
And decks with rainbows where there once was  
gloom,  
That there is nothing left but peace on earth.

## THE HAUNTED HOUSE OF TULARE.

SANDS are ever drifting, drifting where Visalia's  
plain expands,  
Like the snows of dreary winter in the Nova  
Zembla lands ;  
And mirages ever hover, vain phantasmagorial  
dreams,  
Gardens in the air, and rivers fed by bright and  
crystal streams ;  
Beauty clad in beauty's beauty painted on the  
floating clouds,  
Or upon the mists of morning resting like the  
whitest shrouds.

In that land where sands are drifting, where mirages  
e'er conceal  
'Neath their false and fleeting phantoms every  
feature lone and real ;  
In that desert stands a ruin by the sands half-  
covered o'er,  
Long forsaken and forgotten—simoons round it  
rave and roar,  
Wailing o'er the desolation ; and a haze is in the  
air,  
And a solitude of shadows, hopeless, cheerless  
everywhere.

Worn by years of storm and tempest, dingy stand  
the walls and old,  
Overgrown with desert ivy and with dry and husky  
mold.  
Latchless doors on creaking hinges swing unceasing  
day and night,  
As the wind through open gables rushes ruthless in  
its flight.  
Sash in warped and sunken windows rattles as the  
storm goes by,  
Hoarsely like the demons laughing when the world  
was doomed to die.

Long ago, the story runneth, when the West was  
wild and new,  
'T was a wayside inn, and miners passing that dread  
desert through  
Found within these walls a welcome—weary at the  
close of day,  
With the lone and sultry journey and the perils of  
the way.  
Far and wide 't was known, and never turned a  
traveller from its door,  
Who had been denied a welcome in those far off  
years of yore.

But the house is now forsaken, tottering ruins now  
it stands ;  
Tilted on its wrecked foundations, pelted by the  
driven sands.  
And the half-wild herdsmen passing by it in the  
dead of night

Hear the crazy ceiling shaking, and they tremble  
in their fright.

For they tell of voices moaning in the ruin of the  
rooms,

Cries from the departed spirits wandering in the  
shades and glooms.

Dark and fearful are the stories of the deeds that  
there were done ;

Blacker crimes were ne'er enacted 'neath the shining  
of the sun.

In the humid vaults are buried, underneath the  
brick-laid floor,

Many a miner who in dying stained the robber's  
knife with gore.

All is hidden and mysterious. None can tell or  
e'er shall know

Who has perished at the midnight when the lamp  
was burning low ;

Who at one fell blow has yielded unto death's chill  
arms and cold ;

Who has plied the robber's dagger for the curséd  
price of gold.

Who can tell, or who would listen ! Tongue the  
truth will never say

Till the fierce avenging angel tells it on the judg-  
ment day.

Miners tell among each other by their fires at even-  
time,

How their friends and comrades perished in this  
holocaust of crime.

Him they name who at the midnight felt a dagger  
touch his face—  
Leaped for life, and wildly—useless—fell uncon-  
scious in his place ;  
And of him who to his comrades cried for help, but  
cried no more—  
Rushed they to him in the darkness, found him  
dying on the floor.  
And they tell of many and many thus allured into  
the den,  
And no more among the living were they ever seen  
again.

Then of her—and as they tell it, kindness calms the  
miners brow,  
For they love her as they loved her, and they know  
she 's happier now,—  
Then of her they tell the story, how she came from  
far away  
To her brother who was wasting with consumption's  
slow decay.  
In Kaweah's mines she ventured, and no dread or  
fear she felt,  
Seeking there her dying brother, and she at his pil-  
low knelt  
Till his eyes were closed forever, and had hushed  
his fevered breath,  
And she knew his pain was over and relief had  
come in death.  
Not a tear she shed above him as they laid him to  
his rest

'Neath the branches of a cedar standing on the  
mountain crest ;  
Not a tear she shed above him, for she felt that  
after life  
Cometh peace, and calm, and resting from the long  
and bitter strife.

Then to her own home departing passed she through  
that desert lone,  
Pausing oft to hear about her winds in sadness  
sigh and moan—  
Sighing 'mong the desert thistles, moaning round  
the drifts of sand  
Heaped at random down the vista of the dread and  
dreary land.  
In the distance, twilight deepening, rose Tulare's  
House in view  
And before the open doorway soon her horse's rein  
she drew.

'T was a night of dread and darkness. Oh the  
gloom and the despair !  
Heaven, in thy mercy shield her, save her from  
the villain's lair !  
Why, if not a sparrow falleth to be left alone to  
die,  
Why was she unspared, forsaken, when the mid-  
night hurried by ?  
Why ? In vain. That night she perished—mur-  
dered and no hand to save ;  
And the black lamp's ghostly gleaming fell upon  
her midnight grave.

In the desert still is standing, yet more dreary than  
of yore,  
What remains of that old haunted pile on Lake  
Tulare's shore.  
And the herdsmen in the darkness see it and they  
feel afraid,  
Seeing dark and dusky spirits flit and glide from  
shade to shade ;  
Hearing spectres hoarsely laughing at some kindred  
phantom stark ;  
Hearing spirits crying, shrieking to each other in  
the dark ;  
Hearing tread of heavy footfalls galloping from  
room to room,  
From the garret halls and downward to the hidden  
vaults of gloom.  
Then there comes a light, quick footstep, and a  
sweet voice calling low,  
And they say 't is hers who perished—murdered in  
that night of woe.  
Then the herdsmen feel a pity as they spur their  
steeds away  
From the walls, and leave them standing in their  
shadows and decay.  
And the tempest still is beating with unceasing hate  
and rage,  
While the Haunted House is slowly crumbling  
'neath the hand of age.  
Through the air is fiercely driven sand like winter's  
sleet and rain,  
And a fearful desolation hovers o'er Tulare's  
plain.

## EL REFUGIO.

FAR on the coast of a summer-mild ocean,  
Dreary and lonely away in the West,  
Murmur the billows in endless commotion,—  
Softly the vespers are whispered to rest.

Peaceful forever the sunshine is beaming,  
Beautiful in a resplendent repose,  
Mystical, hovering like visions and dreaming  
Over the weary who rest from their woes.

Balmy and calm was the morning, and tender  
Wandered the brightness o'er ocean and shore—  
Flashed the wild sea with its trailing of splendor  
Landward and tideward with musical roar.

All, all alone there 's a grave by a river,  
Near to the sea, but the name is untold ;  
O'er it the leaves of the cottonwoods quiver,  
Round it are blossoms like silver and gold.

Loving and low in their idyls of mildness  
Breezes are playing there all the day long,  
Coming afar o'er the sea in its wildness,  
Bearing perfumes like the music of song.

“Tell me the story, my fancy, the story,  
Tell me,” I said, “is there nothing to tell?  
Nothing that ’s lowly, or nothing of glory,  
Nothing of sadness, or nothing that ’s well?”

Silent is all, and there is no replying,  
Silent is all as the silence of death ;  
Nothing to answer me, asking, but sighing  
Sadly of winds like the pulse of a breath.

Ah, but thou silence ! Thou can’st not deceive me.  
Never ! For thinkest thou nothing is said  
In the deep stillness ? Believe me, believe me,  
Deep are the words of the silent and dead.

Words that I know, though I hear not, for never  
Was there a grave that was voiceless to teach—  
Never, though questioned and questioned forever,  
Hath there been idle or meaningless speech.

In the swift tumult of life we may hear not :  
Hurried along, we may know not how near  
Hands that are cold are about us—we fear not—  
Life in its noonday hath nothing to fear.

But in the silence and stillness, a sadness  
Steals in upon us and speaks to the soul  
Words that destroy all our gayness and gladness,  
Bearing us down to a shadowy goal.

Lingered I then by the summer-mild ocean,  
Chafing against the lone shores of the West,

Chafing the rocks with its storm of emotion ;  
Feelings of sadness came over my rest.

For, at my feet was the grave, where the lowly  
Flowers were blossoming tender and fair ;  
Fragrant and faint were the odors, and holy  
Incense was cast to the wings of the air.

Nameless and wordless and voiceless, unbroken  
Silence was there, save the moan of the sea  
Mingled with whisper of winds ; but unspoken  
Words had a language and meaning for me.

Know I full well that some trusting one sleepeth  
Under the grasses and flowers, and low  
Drooping the linden tree tenderly keepeth  
Sentinel watch over blossoms of snow.

Sleeping is some one beneath the white flowers,  
Well do I know, and I know she was fair,  
Glad and as bright as the beautiful bowers  
Bending above in forgetfulness there.

Fair—it is always the fairest that perish.  
Lovely—'t is always the loveliest die.  
Ever 't is those that we love most and cherish,  
Worship the most, that the soonest pass by.

So it hath been in the past of my story :  
They that I held as the fairest and best,  
They that were pure as the angels of glory—  
They were the first that were whispered to rest.

They were the first that the shadows came over,  
Shadows of night at the dawn of the day—  
Under the violet blossoms of clover  
They that were dearest are silent for aye.

---

## THE EXILE'S LAMENT.\*

FAR away o'er the mists of the solemn sea  
I behold the hills in the sunlight glow,  
And I know they are waiting to welcome me,  
The ones that I loved in the long ago.

O bear me, wind, on your swift, swift wings,  
To my home where the bright and crystal rills  
From the rocks come down, and the valley rings  
With echoes glad from a thousand hills.

O I long to fly from my prison isle,  
And to cross the waves of the dreary sea,  
For I know that the flowers of the forest smile,  
And are blooming and waiting to welcome me.

In the eve, I know when the sun is low  
Its light with beauty the wild wood fills,

\* They tell of an Indian woman who was left alone twenty years on the island San Nicolas, in the Pacific Ocean, west from San Diego. In 1883 I visited that group of islands, and from the Italian fishermen learned the story of the exile. So far as I know it had never then been published; but a writer has since touched upon the subject in the *Youth's Companion*, Boston. These verses were published in 1883 in the *Catholic Universe*, Cleveland, Ohio.—H. M.

And the bright, bright beams in their grandeur glow  
On the crest of the San Diego Hills.

A voice says : " Dead—for the years are long ! "  
Those whom I loved ? O it cannot be !  
For I know they are waiting with voices of song,  
On the shore they are waiting to welcome me.

Remorseless tempests that mock me here,  
And rave on the rocks of this desolate shore,  
I can see my home o'er the waves appear—  
O bear me away to my home once more !

But the winds heed not, and their wings of breath  
Sweep by like the shades of the midnight sweep,  
And they laugh with a voice like the voice of death,  
And deride and mock when I pray and weep.

I will not weep for the whirlwind's jeer ;  
Far over the tide of the stormy sea  
The hills of my childhood home appear,  
And in beauty are waiting to welcome me.

Do the vines still cling to the oak that stood  
' By the crystal spring where the grass was green ?  
Does the pathway lead through the waving wood,  
Where the blue doves play in the shade and  
sheen ?

Do the wild bees hum from flower to flower,  
Those flowers that tremble with their love ?  
Do the faint winds kiss in the morning hour  
The orange bloom from the plains above ?

Do my kindred sing as they used to sing  
Where the wildwood shadows sombre lay,  
When the sea was hushed like a dream of spring,  
And a silence shrouded the summer day ?

O the days are dreary and I long to go  
Where the green trees wave by the sobbing sea—  
They remember me yet, and they love me I know,  
And I know they are waiting to welcome me.

The tireless tides of the wide domain  
Pour over the beach, and the murmurs rise,  
And I hear the low and the sad refrain,  
The dirge of death as the billow dies.

And I look away where the hilltops glow  
In the sun's bright light far over the tide ;  
And my home is there, and I feel and know  
That loved ones wait on the other side.

Ye wandering winds on your watery way,  
O bear me along on your wild, wild wings  
To that vernal vale where the young fawns play,  
And the woodland all with a gladness rings.

Where the cliffs aloft from the ocean loom,  
And guard the groves from the stormy main,  
Where the saffron silk of the cactus bloom  
Is tinged with red like a battle stain.

I will heed not the jeers and the whirlwind's scorn,  
I will look o'er the waves of the stormy sea,  
Where the far hills rest in the light of morn,  
And loved ones are waiting to welcome me.

## THE BLUE QUAIL.

IT is a vernal and a peaceful scene,  
Where bloom the flowers and where wave the  
trees

Forgetfully beside the blue Joaquin,  
Rapt in the softness of the summer breeze.  
The sunshine resting in its golden sheen  
Is blended drowsily with hum of bees ;  
And everywhere around and evermore  
A dream of beauty hovers o'er the shore.

Beneath the trees a tiny blue quail played,  
Or sat for hours and watched the river flow,  
And saw its own quaint picture there portrayed  
In the clear water mirrored deep below.  
The quaking leaves above threw light and shade  
Upon the stream that moved in stillness slow  
Beneath the banks, where trailing mosses hung  
To ancient oaks whose boughs seemed ever young.

But those who now may pause to sleep or rest  
Beside that river, will no longer hear  
The blue quail calling. Dead, the prairies west  
Extend in solitude, and waste and drear.  
The grove is now abloom, and verdure-dressed ;  
But in it is no voice to greet or cheer.

'T is still and lone, and one will strangely feel  
A sadness like a memory o'er him steal.

I passed that way ; and from the summer heat,  
Which on the plains like some vast furnace  
glowed,

I sought the grove of trees, a cool retreat,  
Beneath whose loveliness the river flowed  
Without a murmur. Near beside my feet  
There was a little grave, whereon there snowed  
A shower of milk-white blossoms, settling soft  
From vines that quivered in the trees aloft.

'T was nameless all—a grave without a name,  
An untold history ; and I lingered there  
To muse in fancy ; but no answer came  
To all my questionings. And everywhere  
About and o'er me it was all the same,  
The same sad silence on the summer air,  
And ere drew near the hours of eventide,  
I took my way across the prairies wide.

Hard by the borders of Visalia's plains  
That night with herdsman I lay down to sleep ;  
Oaks centuries old stood round like Druid fanes,  
Above us vigil in the dark to keep ;  
The earth my bed ; and there the clankless chains  
Of weary limbs were lost in slumber deep ;  
And memory, like a star's uncertain gleams,  
Came to me then in visionary dreams.

\* \* \* \* \*

In the dull darkness of the plain I lay,  
And heard the far-off cuckoos calling low.  
The moon with beauty like the dawning day,  
Uprose o'er Whitney's pinnacle of snow—  
Rose softly up, and threw her beams in play  
Athwart the moors, like tides of silver flow,  
As poets say, along the golden sand  
Which mark the boundaries of fairyland.

That night the herdsmen told me of the grave  
Upon the margin of the calm Joaquin,  
And told me truly what the legends gave  
As story of that sadly vernal scene,  
Where flowers about it ever bloom, and wave  
Forevermore the trees in summer green ;  
And glows in sunshine the glad river far,  
Trailing the gleaming of the midnight star.

In other days—in other years—they said,  
A herdsman's home was there, a dingy tent,  
Among the trees. His flocks by day he led  
At random o'er the plains, and stopt or went  
Where pasturage was best. At night his head  
Ne'er knew a pillow, save the earth which lent  
Him solace from his toils. Before the dawn,  
His sleep was done : he with his herds had gone.

He had an only child whose mother slept  
In death beside the sea at Monterey ;  
The orphan boy ne'er knew her name, except  
His father sometimes told him, and would say

That she had gone where plains are softly swept  
By gentlest winds, and airs of summer play  
On river banks all green with grass and bowers,  
And prairies bright and beautiful with flowers.

The father tended o'er the plains his herds  
And left the child alone the livelong day,  
But came again at night with kindly words  
To find him waiting in the twilight gray.  
The last and latest of the evening birds  
To rest among the trees had flown away,  
But still the child his faithful watch would keep,  
Nor, till his father came again, would sleep.

The days were long—the summer days are long  
The whole long summer through. Alone the child  
Played in the grove, or sang some childish song  
While sitting dreamlike where the waters smiled  
Deep in the river ; and he knew no wrong,  
Or thought no wrong. Alfalfa blossoms wild  
Shed fragrance on the winds that wandered there,  
And filled the grove with incense everywhere.

He had no playmates, yet he wished for none.  
He knew not what it was—had never known.  
Scarce did he know that there was any one,  
Except himself and father—they alone—  
In all the world. The shadows and the sun,  
The grove, the river, and the plains that shone  
Shimmering with heat by day—these were the whole  
That earth contained for him from pole to pole.

Nor knew he loneliness. This was his home.

Each blade of grass was his. Each leaf he knew.  
In farthest rambles he would only roam

Down to the borders where the willows grew  
Along the bayou, and the waters gloam

More darkly underneath. He wandered through  
Bright flowers to his waist from morn till night,  
And all the world he knew, he held in sight.

One day he passed where he had never strayed,

Where dwarfed fantastic sycamores abound ;  
Among the tangled grasses in the glade

A tiny blue quail almost dead he found.

Its foot was fast in grass with twining blade

That held it, wound around and round and round.

The trembling bird was weak with cold and fear.

And cried and fluttered, when the child drew near.

The small, slight thing soon lost its fear and fright,

And nestled closely in the child's fond arms,

With trust and tameness, as he held it tight,

As though to shield it from all loud alarms.

And thus he carried it with proud delight,

Where'er he went, and kept it safe from harms,

And held it kindly ; and ere long it grew

So tame that it a fear no longer knew.

Where'er he played the quail was at his side ;

Where'er he wandered, it would wander too ;

It sang for him each eve and morningtide

With curious little voice that sounded through

The grove but faintly, and in sweetness died  
A little distance off, as echoes do ;  
But, to that voice the child would listen long,  
And oft was lulled to slumber by the song.

Then, as he slept, the cunning quail would cease  
And cuddle closely by the child's warm face ;  
And they together there would rest in peace,  
Awearied both alike with many a race  
O'er grassy banks, whose soft and flowery fleece  
Was like a carpet wherein none could trace  
The woof or texture—here the quail and child  
Slept where alfileria blossomed wild.

The long, long summer-time passed like a dream  
Above the child who had no other thought  
But his blue quail. Together by the stream  
Of Joaquin's river, they the shadows sought  
That mingled with the sunlight's gentler gleam,  
And forms of sheen and shade fantastic wrought  
Upon the stillness of the river's breast  
When low the sun was sinking toward the west.

If lost awhile from one another's sight,  
While playing in the grove or on the shore,  
The child would call ; and low, and faint, and light  
The quail would answer, more, and more, and  
more,  
With voice of sweetness, piping soft and slight,  
Till they had found each other. O'er and o'er  
Each other they had lost and found again  
Among the tangled grasses in the fen.

The day was bright and beauteous. Saddest day  
Of all that ever were. The trusting child,  
That knew no harm or danger, ran away  
Where flowers on the shore were growing wild  
O'er hollow banks—ah, fatal, fatal play—  
The last —'t was done ! The flowers that had  
beguiled  
Hung o'er the river bank where waters deep  
Turn in a sullen tide and backward sweep.

One step too far—one treacherous step—'t was o'er.  
The child went down even as he picked the  
flowers,  
And sank beneath the flood to rise no more,  
And all was still. Dark willow trees and bowers  
Of gloomy shade a deeper silence wore  
Than ever hung upon the midnight hours.  
The river lone and merciless moved slow  
With solemn awfulness and deathlike woe.

Then came the breeze of evening's gentle breath  
Upon the stillness, stealing softly on  
Across the grove like whisperings of death—  
One pulselike wave that died—and it was gone ;  
Like one who is forgetting what he saith,  
Even as 't is said. Until the morrow's dawn,  
'T was silence all ; no leaf or tendril stirred,  
Nor wing nor voice of insect or of bird.

Upon the morrow in a lowly grave  
Near by the riverside the child was laid

In rest eternal, where the willows wave  
Above, and cast around a checkered shade.  
The winds that wander there, in kindness lave  
The quaking leaves that quiver as they fade  
And wither in the winter of the year,  
And rustle, falling slowly, sad and sere.

Beside the lowly grave no knee was bent  
In humble imploration or in prayer ;  
No ritual was read with pure intent  
To waft a soul to realms beyond despair ;  
No liturgy of light or love was lent  
To break the stillness that was settled there.  
The grave was made—'t was done and all was o'er,  
The child was resting now forevermore.

What boots it when life's fitful dream is hushed  
Beyond complaining, where our resting be ?  
The heart bowed down with woe, oppressed and  
crushed,  
Will thank the hand that comes to set it free.  
'T is doubly blest when phantom hopes are brushed  
Aside forever ; though we bend the knee  
While they are with us, and implore and pray  
That rudely they shall not be torn away.

Twice blest among the voiceless, dreamless blest  
Are they whose narrow house is closed forever  
Against corroding care. In soothing rest  
The veil is drawn to be uplifted never.  
No grief shall e'er disturb the peaceful breast,  
And nevermore shall faith and love dissever ;

But in that silence which now seemeth lone  
The truest will be first to clasp its own.

The humblest grave that ever earthen sod  
Grew green above, hath had more truth to teach  
Of destiny and justice, man and God,  
Than hath been told by all the human speech  
Since earth began. Beneath our feet the clod  
We tread upon, shall rise at last and preach  
Truth more tremendous, and faith more sublime  
Than man hath ever learned in flight of time.

The herdsman passed away to other plains  
Beyond Mokelumne, and pitched again  
His tent, pursuing still his life of gains  
Among the roving bands of border men.  
The summer brightness and the winter rains  
Came on, and passed, and came. Yet now and  
then  
Would memory lead him back through pensive  
hours  
Unto a grave low hidden in the flowers.

Rough as he was, he never could forget  
The gentler visions of his earlier years.  
Thoughts from the past would gather o'er him yet,  
And in those hours his eyes would fill with tears.  
The past and future at the grave were met—  
That bourne where mingle joys and hopes and  
fears—  
That place where memory weary and distressed  
Returns in sadder hours to muse and rest.

But there was one that did not leave the tomb  
Beside the river. Faithful to the end,  
The tiny quail in sunshine and in gloom  
Remained alone—poor true and trusting friend—  
And lingered where the branches and the bloom  
Above the lowly mound in silence bend  
A canopy of leaves and drooping vines  
Like those that cluster o'er the ancient shrines.

Perchance at times along the river side  
A traveller his journey would pursue :  
Aweary from the prairies drear and wide,  
If he drew near for rest where willows grew,  
He heard the blue quail calling, though denied  
Was answer to the calling : still with true  
And faithful purpose, it would call and call  
From morning's early hours till evenfall.

No answer ever came. It did not know  
How still in death and voiceless was the child.  
It watched the river sweeping deep and slow,  
And saw the flowers that yet were blooming  
wild ;  
And called and waited—called with accents low,  
And waited, waited, waited for the mild  
And gentle answer that the child e'er gave—  
Still called and waited by the silent grave.

The border ranchmen as they wandered by  
With all their lowing herds oft lingered near  
To listen to the low and plaintive cry  
Which through the grove was rising soft and  
clear.

The quail still called, but there was no reply,  
Save where the river banks would echo drear,  
Scarce heard, as when the voice of Orpheus pled  
For lost Eurydice among the dead.

The summer and the autumn all the while  
Were passing slowly day by day away ;  
And winter frowning chased the summer smile  
From all the landscape ; and each dawning day  
Was drearer ; and along for many a mile  
The plain extended, cheerless, cold, and gray,  
And in the distance, far as sight could run,  
The clouds and prairies bending, seemed as one.

The night was cold. A bitter, bitter blast  
Of wind and rain was beating in the dark.  
Torrent in chase of torrent hurried past,  
Howling among the trees, whose branches stark  
Rose bare and cold, determined to the last  
To stand the storm, like some half-ruined bark  
Braves still the oceans, though its very path  
Is strewn with wrecks to mark the tempest's wrath.

The clouds were rushing low upon the earth,  
And in dark billows sweeping through the air.  
The night tornadoes howled with hideous mirth  
Like demons in the regions of despair,  
Rejoicing o'er some new destroyer's birth,  
In whose wild carnivals they hoped to share.  
The mists and darkness rolling through the gloom  
Seemed bent to hurl creation to its tomb.

Without a sympathy for human kind,  
Is nought sincere, or nothing truly great ?  
Must nature's elements be undefined  
Until with human and with human hate  
They mingle, and a touch of mortal mind  
Flows in the current, and the sad estate  
Of ruined innocence be held in view,  
With wreck, and wrack, and madness rushing  
through ?

It hath been said, with greater truth than mine,  
That not a sparrow shall be left to die  
In all the world-wide wastes, but that divine  
And pitying hands will shield it, and deny  
It not in that sad hour relief benign,  
And to its lowest pleadings make reply,  
And gently shelter it from cruel blast  
Until its ebbing life has ceased at last.

Thus it is said. Let us not rush our doubt  
Into the face of truth. We may not know  
Whereof we question, saying with a shout  
Of exultation : “ It is always so !  
The strong are sheltered ; but in storms without  
The weak are perishing, and none will go  
To bear deliverance to them.” Question not ;—  
Believe ! Believe we must !—we know not what !

The morning dawned. The tempest had grown  
still.

Its rage was over now. Its fury spent.  
The sunshine softly came, like one whose will

Is love, and peace, and tenderness, and lent  
To earthly forms for beauty's sake, until  
There is no dream on earth but calm content  
And rest forevermore, and truth, and love,  
All blended with a radiance from above.

That morn a traveller passed ; and as he drew  
His horse's rein, and listened for the call  
Of the blue quail, as he was wont to do,  
He heard the dawn-winds whisper—that was all.  
The grove was silent, save that breezes blew  
With faintest rustle where the flowers tall  
Grew round the grave. There in the sunshine warm  
The quail lay dead—had perished in the storm.

Such was the story as they told it me ;  
A simple story, but with deeper part  
Of undercurrent feeling than may be  
In many another—nearer to the heart  
That feels what blinded eyes can never see,  
And throbs in nature, though acold to art—  
Beats with a sympathy and love and trust  
For all that 's true, though lowly as the dust.

Then, I had stood beside the grave, and felt  
An awe come o'er me, though I did not know  
The story then. But something solemn dwelt  
About me—kin alike to love and woe.  
Obeying this, the dreaming ancients knelt  
Submissive down, millenniums ago,  
In adoration to an unseen mind  
Of might and power, yet ever true and kind.

Hard by the margin of the calm Joaquin,  
If e'er thou pass that way draw near and rest  
Beneath the trees that wave their branches green,  
And cast their shadows on the river's breast.  
Enjoy the stillness of that sylvan scene,  
And breathe the spirit of the glorious West,  
And feel the sacredness that dwelleth there,  
Rapt through the silence of the pulseless air.

Then turn away—but linger yet awhile ;  
Ere close of day there still is ample time  
To cross the sultry prairies many a mile  
And reach Visalia's plains before the chime  
Of vesper bells, where flocks the hours beguile,  
And nature revels in her glorious clime.  
Then linger yet awhile ; thou hast not seen  
The grave beneath the bowers bending green.

Draw nearer yet, and feel the sacred trust  
Thou oughtest to thyself—deny it not—  
'T were better here to mingle with the dust  
Than turn unfeeling from this hallowed spot.  
'T were better not to be, than here to thrust  
Thy better nature back to be forget,  
And thou go forth into the world again,  
The coldest clay of all the race of men.

Mark if thou wilt these flowers as white as snow,  
That fall like snowflakes from the clinging vines,  
And settle softly on the grave below,  
Like wreathes and garlands which some loved  
one twines

For the cold brow of one who ne'er will know  
What love is worth, or how the heart repines  
When death has torn away the golden chain  
And left all love on earth almost in vain.

Thou hast beheld. Now to thyself return—  
Bring back thy thoughts and turn them on thy  
soul.

Look through thy sympathies, and ask, and learn  
Where drifts that heart of thine which has no goal  
Of love to turn to? Wrapped in fires that burn  
Thy very nature out! Is this the whole  
Of thine existence? Ask thyself, and stand  
Before the bar—that doom's uplifted hand.

Shrink if the cry of *guilty* pierces thee.

Thou hast deserved it all, and more than all.  
'T will teach thee truly what thy life shall be,  
And rescue thee, perhaps, from fataler fall.  
Build from this hour, and turn no more to see—  
As thou hast done, exulting from the wall  
Of thine ambition—others hurled with wrath  
Down headlong as they climbed the upward path.

I stood beside that grave. It was no dream,  
Though like a vision. Spectres seemed to rise  
And stalk before the east; and in the stream  
Down memory's wasted past, I heard the cries  
Which other days had hushed; and through the  
gleam

Of hope again, I heard the low replies:  
"I love thee yet," and, "Thou wilt never know  
How much I loved thee in the long ago."

I stood beside the grave, and memories came—  
The grave awakens memories that sleep—  
I stood beside the grave, and spoke a name,  
And heard no answer from the silence deep.  
But why complaining? It will be the same  
Forever. It is useless now to keep  
Remembrance burning with unceasing fire  
That sears until all sympathies expire.

I turned away, like one who fain would cling  
To something dear, but which, alas, is lost.  
I turned away; and swift as eagle's wing  
My charger bore me, and the plain was crossed.  
O'er rocky bars I heard the steel hoofs ring,  
And o'er low hills with whitest quartz embossed;  
Athwart the shimmering heat of desert sands  
Where the mirage unveiled celestial lands.

And when came on the twilight gloaming-time,  
I rested on El Rio Bravo's shore.  
In front the white Sierras rose sublime,  
Away to south the plain stretched evermore.  
Anear me welled a low and soothing chime  
Of bells, where flocks were grazing pastures o'er.  
'T was peaceful all, and I lay down to sleep  
Where ancient oaks around their vigil keep.

The herdsmen told the story of the tomb  
Beside the Joaquin River; and the night  
Seemed lone to me; for through the shade and  
gloom

My thoughts went back like fancy in its flight  
To other realms. Where mighty mountains loom  
In five wild peaks, the moon poured o'er its light,  
And silent beams were round me softly cast  
Until in drowsiness I slept at last.

---

## THE TWO SHIPS.

I linger here by the ocean shore.  
'T is the eve of a dreamy summer day ;  
And I hear the billows rush and roar  
On the shingle strand of the misty bay.

The moan of waves from the broken sea  
Comes like a sobbing voice of woe,  
And brings a sadness over me,  
Like a vain regret from the long ago.

Two ships are sailing over the tide—  
One sails away, and one draws nigh ;  
But both are sweeping with glorious pride,  
Their white sails leaning against the sky.

Sweep on, proud ship, to the wide, wide sea !  
Proud ship, from the wide, wide sea, come home !  
You bear no one who is dreaming of me,  
And I am waiting for none that roam.

For none ? Then why am I waiting now  
On the sullen ocean's sobbing shore

Which chides me, and mocks me, and murmurs :

“Thou

Art waiting for one who will come no more.”

So be it, then, if it must be so :

I am not waiting ; I have ceased to wait.

I will not cherish a theme of woe

That is chained upon me by iron fate.

The ship draws nearer and nearer the shore—

O the weary souls that will soon be home !

Ah, some true heart beats more and more

As the ship plows proudly through the foam.

It flings into the air the spray

That glows with a thousand colors bright,

Where the evening sunbeams flash and play

In the splendor of their trailing light.

But what is that to me ? I feel

A merciless and proud disdain

For others, and their woe and weal,

And joy and sorrow, grief and pain !

Why should I feel, when no one feels

Or cares for me, or hopes for me,

Or thinks of me ? My heart congeals

Like the changeless field of a frozen sea !

And I gaze across the watery plain

Where the gloomy western oceans roll,

And my pulses throng with a high disdain,

Like a storm that rushes beyond control.

The ship has touched the land at last—

Hands clasp glad hands and glad hearts beat.  
Loved ones look back over dangers past,  
And dear are the words that their lips repeat.

I sit aside and watch the throng,  
And I see that some are so happy there  
That their panting lives are borne along  
On the tide of bliss like an angel's prayer.

Come, wanderer, home to her you love.  
You have not learned the future yet.  
The sun shines beautiful above,  
But the night will come when the sun has set.

Be happy now. Thou dost not know—  
Thou ne'er hast sailed in the midnight black  
O'er waters strewn with wrecks of woe,  
With not a star to lead thee back.

But let that pass. It is not for all  
To know what some must know who kneel  
To plead with Heaven that there may fall  
A sleep of rest till the heart can heal.

Must I be made the sport and jest  
Of him whose shallow life is wound  
About a shallower soul, and drest  
For outward show, and naught profound?

Of this no more! The summer's past.  
My memory bringeth back in chains  
What should be free. The die is cast—  
I *will* forget, though the world disdains!

Should I to a sinking wreck thus cling  
When I know destruction is the end ?  
No ! I will every memory fling  
To the four wild winds, and the fetters rend

From off my life, that bind me fast,  
And smother me, and press, and crush  
Me down beneath the ruined past,  
Beneath the waves that rave and rush !

But soft ! 'T is useless thus to rave  
Against the hardness of my fate.  
'T is vain for me to rashly brave  
Predestined anarchy and hate.

'T is vain for me to stem the tide  
Which has no coast, or strand, or shore ;  
'T is vain to battle fate with pride—  
Pride will go down forevermore.

A stranded wreck has left me lone,  
And has taught my heart to be as steel,  
And to look on grief as it looks on stone,  
Yet to feel as none other can ever feel.

But where is the ship from the wide, wide sea ?  
'T is here. And the one that sailed away  
From the silent land, from the shore and me,  
Is fading now in the dull mist's gray.

Across the waves my eyes pursue,  
And the storm within my soul is hushed.  
I can feel the breath of something true—  
Live yet unfettered and uncrushed.

Again calm recollections rise,  
And a soothing rest comes over me  
As I look away to the western skies  
Where the ship is passing out to sea.

Ah, I cannot know what true heart now  
Sails with that ship away, and turns  
Back toward the shore. Her marble brow  
Is white and fair ; but her longing yearns,

Perhaps, for one whose last adieu  
Was said beside me, though unheard ;  
Who promised love forever true,  
With a trust on every whispered word.

The ship sails on with a regal pride,  
And plows the waves from crest to crest,  
And slowly sinks beneath the tide  
That bends away in the golden west.

I 'm left alone. The gleaming waves  
Roll far away with crests of light ;  
And the warm, soft south wind gently laves  
The strand that stretches far and white.

Mild evening hour ! But lone and drear  
To me ; for I remember yet  
One falser than a dream—but dear—  
Whom I will not love—cannot forget.

Is the brain run wild that asks for nought  
But to be forgotten and left alone ?  
That feels what others have never thought,  
And flies whence others have never flown ?

The future—were it mortal sin

To set one's faith on the coming years ?

To turn away from the *might have been*

To the *ne'er will be*, that bourne of tears ?

Is there a sleep that no more will break,

Which dims the eyes while the brain throbs still ?

And are there dreams that rise, and take

The reins, and lash and drive the will ?

Am I thus dulled, and drugged, and driven—

A dreamer on a phantom shore ?

Is that low, sad whisper, “unforgiven !”

My chiding fancy, nothing more ?

Ah, be it so. I hope 't is so.

I hope no waking e'er will be

From out that slumbering long ago,

For what is past is naught to me.

It is nothing to me, proud ship, sail on.

What matter if some look back with tears,

And plead for the days now past and gone,

And turn and shrink from the coming years ?

'T is the fate of all. Then why lament ?

Why cherish still, and dream, and yearn

For the past ? It hath at best but lent

The fagot torch to sear and burn

The fondest hopes and the dearest themes

Which thou wouldst cling to evermore ;

And it tears away the fairy dreams

Which were thine idols in years of yore.

I *will* not remember ! I will turn mine eyes  
From the mocking waste of the desert sea.  
I *will* forget, though my spirit cries  
To her who will never come back to me.

---

## THE MOANING ROCK.

JUST where Los Critas meets the sea  
From Gaviota Pass,  
I rested in the morning hours  
On turf of ocean grass.

Then wild and high against the sky  
The mountain summits hung,  
Above the roar along the shore  
Where surf a-land was flung.

The mountain cleft, from top to base,  
Asunder yawned, and through  
The dark abyss Los Critas flowed  
To meet the ocean blue.

This was the Gaviota Pass,  
As deep and dread as death,  
Where winds distil their dews, and chill  
The rocks with humid breath.

A path like which the Mantuan Bard  
Sung led from earth below  
Through shades of night and gloom and blight  
To everlasting woe.

From groves along the bright Ynez  
Of late I came, and past  
That morn through Gaviota wild  
And reached the sea at last.

As I had walked between the walls  
Of rock on either side,  
I heard a whisper over me—  
It whispered once, and died.

Save that, and nothing more was heard.  
The battlements of stone  
On left and right as dark as night  
Rose gloomily and lone.

A thousand feet above they seemed  
To frown, and all but meet  
Across the chasm. The river flowed  
And murmured at my feet.

A streamer-breadth of azure sky  
Spanned overhead, as deep  
As ever bent above the earth  
Where southern summers sleep.

From up the Pass the sea breeze came  
With odors of the tide,  
And wandered on like airs of dawn,  
And died, and lived, and died.

I heard again the voice. It seemed  
No whisper, but a moan  
From caverned heights the river o'er  
Along the front of stone.

'T was still again, forever hushed ;  
I heard it nevermore.

I passed adown the narrow way,  
And reached the ocean shore.

The morn was bright with floods of light,  
And on the turf and flowers  
I lay me down to rest, and dream  
Away the noontide hours.

I looked through haze and ocean maze  
Toward realms beyond the sight,  
And thought how far the vesper star  
Must trail its tender light

Before it shines on other shores,  
Or kisses softly there  
The occidental blooming world  
All mystical and fair.

Then toward the craggy heights I turned  
To mark how grand and lone  
Those everlasting summits loomed  
On high their columned stone.

Beside me mingling in the sea,  
Los Critas ceased to flow.  
Its waters mild had met the wild  
And raging surf below.

The sobbing of the sullen sea  
The sunken reefs among,  
Came like a vain and low refrain  
When saddest songs are sung.

This brought to memory again  
The Moaning Rock. I knew  
Its legend lore. A part is false,  
But part is doubly true.

The story runneth thus : There was,  
A hundred years ago,  
A band of bandits harbored there,  
And plundered to and fro.

Full many and many a deed of death  
They did on shore and plain ;  
And many and many a curséd crime  
Was done for hate and gain.

They ever dared, and never spared,  
Nor mercy ever knew ;  
They dreamt of gold, and gold, and gold,  
And pillaged far, and slew ;

Until their band had filled the land  
With rumors and with fear ;  
For no one knew at what dark hour  
They might be hovering near.

'T was vain to seek them on the plain  
With force arrayed for fight ;  
For they would vanish like a flash,  
And save themselves in flight.

'T was death to follow in pursuit,  
For, in their rocky glen,  
One hidden bandit by the path  
Could slaughter fifty men.

But once, when autumn winds were raw,  
And mists were hanging low  
Along each rocky precipice,  
As bleak and white as snow,

They heard a dismal voice that seemed  
Above them moaning, "*Death*"—  
It was the Moaning Rock. They stood  
Aghast with bated breath.

The voice of woe was sobbing low.  
Their guilt increased their dread.  
They said it was the souls returned  
From all their murdered dead.

Each swarthy cheek and brow and face  
Was changed to ghastly white—  
A breeze passed by—the moan again—  
They wheeled in headlong flight.

With rush and strife they fled for life  
Or death, the legend says ;  
Nor halted till they were beyond  
Jonata and Ynez.

Nor halted even then, but crossed  
Arroyo Grande's source,  
And through Cañade Del Osos  
They shaped their flying course.

They passed the Huer-Huero lone,  
That tideless river bed,  
And through the depths of Avernall  
In terror still they fled.

Till in the wastes beyond the hills  
Where barren deserts burn,  
They hid themselves among the dunes  
That drift along the Kern.

They fled as those who fly from fear  
And know not whence they fly.  
They trembled like a traitor doomed  
Who is afraid to die.

And never after that again  
Dared one of them to tread  
The path through Gaviota Pass,  
That haunted ground of dead.

And still, although, a hundred years  
Have run their course since then,  
The moaning voice may yet be heard,  
Along the gloomy glen.

It ceases not in dark of night,  
In morning hours, and low  
When evening twilight settles down,  
And shadows come and go.

And those who pass that way yet fear,  
And say that spirits cry,  
Imploring piteously for aid  
To every passer-by.

That summer morn I took my way  
Adown the dark ravine  
Along the river where it flowed  
The mighty walls between.

And overhead I heard the moan,  
And paused to make reply ;—  
The hollow rocks were murmuring  
In the breezes passing by.

I took my way and paused no more,  
Till by the ocean side  
I rested where the grass and flowers  
Were waving in their pride.

While backward from the sea arose  
The mountains grand and high ;  
Their base was in the ocean waves,  
Their summits in the sky.

And all the stories of the past  
In memory came again ;  
The legend of the Moaning Rock  
In that abysmal glen.

---

ÁDIOS.

MY Mabel Saint Clair,  
With golden hair,  
I have told thee adieu forever,  
It is all in vain  
And will bring but pain  
To meet and again dis sever.

We have parted now,  
And I and thou  
Asunder far are drifting ;

But I turn my eyes  
To the future skies  
Where the clouds and mists are lifting.

There is calm at last.  
For the storm is past,  
The storm of bitter sorrow ;  
Of passion-strife  
And a blighted life  
With all that pride can borrow ;

With all of woe  
That pride can know,  
And hopes that have been blighted ;  
With all the cost  
Of love that 's lost,  
And spurned, and unrequited.

But the storm that crushed  
And raved and rushed,  
Has passed away and left me  
To stem the tide  
Of my ruined pride,  
And of all beside bereft me.

But the calm has cast  
Its peace at last  
Like a song of rest above me,  
And why lament  
With a discontent,  
Though none are left to love me !

For should I repine  
At this fate of mine,  
And turn away from the morrow,  
To brood on grief  
And refuse relief,  
And cling to the shades of sorrow?

For the south wind oft  
With its whisper soft  
Will come as I am drifting ;  
While the sky above  
Looks down with love  
Where the mists are rising, rifting.

I can proudly cast  
To the storm the past,  
And the storm will bear it ever  
With a rush and sweep  
Across the deep  
To the Phantom Shores of Never.

I will drift away  
Through the mystic day,  
I will drift and drift forever.  
And will look no more  
To the sinking shore,  
To the Phantom Shore of Never.

I will drift along  
Through the summer song  
To the sea where the sun is setting ;

While the winds will play  
O'er the fairy way,  
I will banish all dull regretting.

Then, Mabel Saint Clair  
With golden hair,  
Adieu ! It is better boldly  
To bid good-bye  
With a friendship sigh,  
Than to treat each other coldly.

We now can part,  
And no one's heart  
Will be forever broken ;  
We can both forget  
Whatever yet  
Of loving words were spoken.

'T is the best for thee  
And the best for me  
That now our paths should sever ;  
And over the tide  
Of unyielding pride  
We will drift apart forever.

## SAN JOAQUIN.

GENTLE river, softly flowing, bear to sea thy  
sands of gold ;

Wend thy way through waving meadows where the  
fairest flowers unfold ;

Whisper sweetly, gently murmur all along thy  
beauteous way ;

Lisp thy music to the mellow gloaming of the  
golden day.

No rude storms shall e'er betide thee ; chilling  
wind shall ne'er be near ;

Sempiternal spring shall hide thee from the frown  
of winter drear ;

Gorgeous groves shall bend above thee, and the  
larks their songs will sing ;

From their truest hearts they love thee as they  
love the rapturous spring.

O thou fancy's fairest river ! Where thy crystal  
waters glide

Through an Eden and an Aidenn and an El Dora-  
do wide,

Let me linger, for the stillness settles o'er me soft  
and slow,

And a train of recollections bear me back to long  
ago.

San Joaquin ! How like that river where so oft at  
eventide

I have strolled in dream ideal when a gleam was on  
the tide,

When the evening sun was setting, and the splendor caught the trees,  
Rustling restless, calmly quaking in the pulses of the breeze ;  
Stirring as the spirit stirreth when a wafting from away  
Steals along with beauteous sadness, but to pass and die for aye ;  
But to pass in silent yearning softer than the summer's breath,  
Onward to the after-stillness listening through the dawn of death.

Dream of beauty ! Deeper dreaming ! For her hand in mine was laid,  
And her name the zephyrs whispered as we lingered in the shade.  
All my wayward, longing spirit panting to be borne away  
Out beyond the Mystic Islands and the portals of the day,  
Then was lulled and tamed, and kindness soothed me to a calm repose ;  
But *she* knew it not, and happy be she if she never knows.  
Happier still, if never, never comes the memory of the past  
With its phantoms and its shadows and its sorrows overcast ;  
Happier if the blighted summer kindle not a bitter strife  
In the current of existence flowing to a purer life ;

Happier if the solemn autumn live not in the after  
spring,  
Brushing with its spectre pinions hopes that fly on  
newer wing ;  
Happier—curséd boon !—but happier if the past  
she can forget—  
If she ever knew it—laden with the dulness of  
regret.

San Joaquin ! A weary truant sees in thee a pulse-  
less deep,  
Where the mirrored sky and mountains, trees, and  
clouds of summer sleep.  
O how peacefully they 're resting ! How the azure  
and the blue  
Of the sky and of the mountains there are pictured  
to the view !  
How the verdant trees are imaged, and the clouds  
are floating high,  
And the whiteness is a lightness to the deepness of  
the sky !  
But the river, dull and soulless, pictures and does  
nothing more ;  
What is painted in the water is the shadow of the  
shore.

River, flowing, gently flowing, 'neath thy arbors  
dark and green,  
Bright and flashing crystal river, still and placid  
San Joaquin,  
Thou remindest me—but pardon, for it is an idle  
dream—

Of the silent soul of human, like thy deep and  
waveless stream.

Some there are whose still existence pictures what  
is never said ;

Thrills that flash along their being thus are smothered  
till they 're dead.

Hearts that beat with love have listened but a  
whispered word to hear ;

But the word was never spoken, and—the future  
all was drear.

All the forms deep in the river are to vision only  
known ;

Not a whisper tells their presence, not a lisp or  
monotone.—

But the theme is too mysterious ; and the likeness  
of the two,

Human thoughts and voiceless river, after all is  
nothing true.

One is soul and one is soulless. One is life and  
one is death.

One is language of the vision ; one of words no  
mortal saith.

Why should I distort a meaning? Why should I  
thus liken all

To myself—my sullen nature? Never ! I will dis-  
enthrall

What is pure and fair and gentle from the darkness  
and the gloom

That surrounds my path forever, though I walk the  
fields of bloom.

Wave, thou vales of life, in gladness ! Wave in  
beauty and in bliss !

In the fiercest of my passions I will not degrade to  
this—

I will not in vengeful hatred aim to drag all beauty  
down

That it may be servile minion to my anger and my  
frown.

Though the world hath not befriended, though it  
hath its sorrow lent

To my life, and when I pleaded for the light, hath  
shadows sent,

Yet I will not dash defiance in its false, deceitful  
face ;

But through all the tumult throngings I will keep  
my steady place.

What to me is man and nations ! What to me is all  
the throng

Of creation's baser beings swept in wretchedness  
along !

What is it to me if never they should see, or feel, or  
know

That I am, or was, or shall be ! I care not if it is  
so.

I can stem existence. I can stem the tide of life,  
and fling

Taunts to him who offers solace—who insults with  
such a thing !

Human hate can never crush me ! I can hold a  
higher part

Than the common herd that tramples cattle-like the  
common mart.

I can breathe the purer current of the purer upper  
air,

And despise the baser passions crowding 'neath me  
everywhere.

I am to myself companion—I was driven thus to be ;  
For the world has always hated me, was never kind  
to me.

When I sought to move in common with the mighty  
age of life

And be of them and among them in their labor and  
their strife,

They have turned to trample on me, to deride me,  
and to scorn—

They the weakest of the weakest that on earth were  
ever born !

So I rose in my rebellion, I who bow to nothing  
higher,

Save unto the God that giveth me my flood of pas-  
sion fire !

Must I sink myself, to grovel with the low and with  
the base,

With the grazing herds that glory in the name of  
human race !

Must I sink, to make them better—was it set a task  
of mine

To go down to degradation, casting jewels unto  
swine !

Soft—I go too far. But anger kindled in me when  
I felt

That they scorned me—for I never yet to mortal  
man have knelt.

Heaven gave me as my portion nature that can  
never kneel—  
True to truth and kind to kindness, but to scorn as  
fierce as steel.  
Unto those who have despised me, 't is not me to  
plead and weep ;  
But I turn and dash upon them hate a million times  
as deep.  
And if thus I crush them, pity none for them I ever  
know,  
I can gloat in satisfaction on their ruin and their  
woe—  
If they hate me. But if kindness has been shown  
me, I can turn  
To the one who hath befriended, feeling all my  
being burn  
With a love that is eternal. That far world when  
this is o'er  
Will not hold a love supremer, deep, and true  
forevermore.  
So then in my hate and anger I may speak of all  
the world,  
Meaning almost all. And 'gainst them bitter ha-  
tred I have hurled.  
But anathemas are sweeping, and I fain that they  
would spare  
One from out the race of human, loved, and beau-  
teous, and fair ;  
One who in that happy summer, by that shaded  
river-side,  
Wandered with me where the gleaming of the sun  
of evening died ;

One who in her angel kindness hath been more than  
friend to me,  
True, and trusting, and confiding—in my gloom I  
turn to thee,  
Thou who never scorned or hated, thou who never  
turned away,  
Wearied hearing my complaining, fretting though  
I was for aye.  
Unto thee in this my sorrow would I turn—I turn  
to thee  
Knowing that thy heart is beating still with sym-  
pathy for me.  
Never can despair be victor over him who feels the  
power  
Of a woman's love and kindness, though the tem-  
pest-night shall lower.  
Through the gloom her promise cometh, and the  
storm will cease awhile,  
Lighted by the tranquil beauty and the gladness of  
her smile.  
Thou whose smile hath ever followed me in dark-  
ness and in blight,  
Art thou dreaming of me? I am lost in tempests  
and in night.  
I have thought myself forsaken, and in anger I have  
curst  
Human kind, and from them madly turned away,  
all links to burst,  
All the fetters burst that bind me to my kindred  
mortal race.  
Then I've turned again in vengeance back to smite  
them in the face.

But for thee I have relented—I have let my anger  
die—  
I will smother my resentment—for thy sake I pass  
it by.

San Joaquin, the storm is over. It has dashed me  
in its wrath.

It has strewn its wrecks about me, and blockaded  
every path ;

And at one wild burst of billows I believed that all  
was o'er,

That it was in vain to battle for existence any  
more.

But that gentle guiding angel came, and in the  
darkest hour

Led me from the wild tornado that was dashing in  
its power

Over me ; while I upbraided, taunted still, and  
fiercely hurled

My anathemas of vengeance 'gainst the raging,  
surging world.

But I soon had sunk exhausted in the wildness of  
the tide,

Going down while blindly clinging to the wreck of  
ruined pride.

But she came and led me safely from the madness  
of the blast,

Up again where light of beauty round about my  
way was cast.

San Joaquin, and hast thou wearied with my pas-  
sion and my scorn ?

Hast thou wished that night would hush me, and  
that there would be no morn ?  
Stream of happiness and mildness ! How thy  
peaceful waters rest,  
Thou the brightest and the fairest of the rivers of  
the West !  
I have mused and dwelt beside thee till my thoughts  
are not my own ;  
They, like me, alas, are wayward, and to distant  
climes have flown.

And in other times and places I have been while  
here I am,  
Till my feelings and emotions have been lulled into  
a calm.  
Peaceful calm to one aweary, when the memory  
feels repose,  
Wrapped in soothing recollection's blandest breeze  
of bliss that blows !

San Joaquin, the night is drearer, though anear the  
dawning day ;  
Waves that whisper, fondly name her, and my  
thoughts are far away.  
Whisper, whisper, whisper, whisper, while the stars  
their vigil keep,  
And my memory drinks nepenthe and is softly  
lulled to sleep.

## NACIMIENTO.

THE story in the flight of years will pass  
Forevermore away, till men deny  
That such has ever been. And weeds and grass  
Will grow more rank where now the ruins lie  
On Paso Robles Plain. No voice, alas,  
Will come from out that silence to reply,  
Where broken walls and sculptured architraves  
Are strewn about, like waste Chaldea's graves.

And didst thou never come that desert through ?  
For it is all a barren desert now,  
And curst with curses more than Egypt knew  
When frowned upon by God Almighty's brow.  
Didst thou across that plain thy way pursue ?  
Of that lone solitude what thinkest thou ?  
Believest thou that Heaven will curse a land  
In vengeance for the crimes of human hand ?

What is the bourne of vengeance from on high ?  
Where is the refuge when the die is cast,  
And unto Heaven is flung the proud defy ?  
Look back through ancient years and see the  
past,  
Where Sodom for her sins was doomed to die,  
And Land of Nile in darkness stood aghast

When Amram's son was on the troubled coast,  
And wild the sea's red waves rolled o'er the host.

Where now is Tyre, whose pride in ancient times  
Bent not in love or prayer the suppliant knee ;  
Who sent her silver sails to nameless climes,  
And spread her commerce over land and sea ?  
Though high and proud, she perished for her crimes,  
And from her chains no wealth could set her free ;  
And nets of fishermen along the shore  
Remain alone to tell of powers of yore.

Think then of this, of all these lands of old,  
With all their old iniquities, and know  
That vengeance hath pursued with footsteps bold  
The criminals and crimes of long ago.  
In memory read again the history told  
Of powers in destruction levelled low,  
Nor disbelieve that vengeance follows fast,  
And doom, though long delayed, will come at last.

Athwart that drear and deathlike desert shore,  
That solitude of Paso Robles Plains,  
A waft of silence tells that all is o'er ;  
That life has wasted in the tyrant's chains ;  
That beauty all hath perished evermore  
And in its stead a desolation reigns—  
If thou hast passed that way thou felt it so :  
About thee thou hast seen the gleam of woe.

So, came ye never by that ancient heap  
Of broken walls and wrecks of gloomy aisles,

And arches warped, through which in anger sweep  
The storms that rage around the crumbling piles  
Of masonry? Save this, a silence deep  
Is there forever ; and a sadness smiles.  
But 't is the smile that comes with lone despair  
When hopes are hushed in ruin everywhere.

It was the Temple of the San Antone  
Hard by Salinas, to the westward still  
Of that sad river ; and it stands alone  
A fearful ruin now. Yea, not a thrill  
Of life is anywhere ; and whence have flown  
Its prophets over plain and eastern hill ;  
And ere the dawning of our modern day  
The race from off the earth had passed away.

The Temple stands, though not as in the eld ;  
It stands as Nineveh or Babylon stands.  
To earth its proudest walls and towers are felled ;  
They lie half-buried in the drifting sands.  
Where once the strains of sacred music swelled,  
While priests were praying with uplifted hands,  
Are now but catacombs of mist and gloom,  
A sepulchre, a violated tomb.

The plains are dead, are dead, if death can be  
For things inanimate. Their life hath fled ;  
And nothing there the poet now can see,  
Except the awfulness of what is dead.  
The branch and bough of shrubbery and tree,  
Which should be green, are withering instead ;  
And winds among them pass with dismal moan,  
And he who listens feebleth more alone.

Is this a curse? It was not always lost  
In desolation thus. There was a time  
When o'er the valley, paths at random crossed;  
And tribes of men were dwelling in this clime  
Full happily, with earnest life engrossed,  
Unknowing how the penalty for crime  
Would hurry all to exile far away  
Where eastern hills first touch the dawn of day.

There was a priest who in the Temple dwelt  
And prayed for all, and they his words obeyed.  
When he had bidden, they had come and knelt,  
And humbly listened while for them he prayed.  
His words were low and fervent, and would melt  
The hardest hearts, and those in most degrade;  
And when to Heaven he would implore for grace,  
They said that light divine was on his face.

But he was false. In his revolting soul  
He plotted crime of blackness like a night.  
When he had prayed, 't was but to gain control,  
And not to guide to paths of truth and right.  
'T was wealth and power, to him the only goal  
That he had ever dreamed of. To his sight  
Were visions evermore of wealth untold.  
He held a soul as naught when priced with gold.

Thrice and a thousand times let men despise  
Those who the righteous cause of God profane;  
Who raise to heaven their hypocritic eyes,  
While in their hearts is naught but worldly gain.  
Their very prayers are worse than pagan lies,  
And fraught with poison and with deadly bane—

May Heaven in kindness and in mercy send  
Deliverance from such, from such defend !

Why should ye marvel that the plains were curst,  
Those plains of Paso Robles ; and a waste  
Made from the flowery valleys ; and a thirst  
Of desert death sent down in ruthless haste ?  
If not, then wrath of vengeance ne'er should burst  
On human kind, or on a land disgraced ;  
There is a justice that the world must feel,  
And they who will not pray at least must kneel.

In truth 't is said, these wastes were once aglow  
With flowers blooming from the sloping crest  
Of hills, and in the valleys down below,  
Across the prairie pastures toward the west,  
And everywhere about where flowers could grow,  
And all was clad the brightest and the best  
That nature in her luxury could give,  
To teach mankind to love as well as live.

Nor were these hills the homes of savage men.  
Far from it. Here the saving truth was spread  
That man, though lost in sin, may live again  
By grace of Him who judgeth quick and dead.  
Nor were those rocks afar the roaring den  
Of mountain beasts, but flocks and herds were  
led  
To crop the herbage rank ; and kindest care  
Was given and was looked for everywhere.

No storm of winter, pitiless and cold,  
E'er blew upon the hungry or the weak ;

But safely sheltered in securest fold,  
They knew not when the winds were blowing  
bleak.

From that far hill, where oaks were growing old,  
To hills on other hand, thou well might seek,  
And ever seek in vain, for cruel hands  
In olden days through all these flowery lands.

Not all in vain. For where thou thinkest not  
To find a monster, there thou shouldst beware,  
For thou shalt find him. Skilled in every plot  
Of pillage, plunder, ruin, and despair  
Was he, the priest who held the sacred lot  
To pray for men. But he would do and dare  
Though burning thunder hung above his head.  
He neither feared the living nor the dead.

'T was evermore his purpose and his plan  
To heap his coffers till they groaned with gold :  
Nor cared he for the soul of child or man,  
If he of wealth could get but firmer hold.  
His thoughts and dreams to such forever ran ;  
And in his avarice he grew more bold.  
And if from out his heart he ever prayed  
'T was that the way to wealth be clearer made.

There is no God to answer such a plea,  
Except to smite the face of him who prays,  
And seal the last and merciless decree  
That leaves him to pursue his downward ways,  
To plunge him headlong in the burning sea—  
His conscience bared to meet the scorching rays

Of endless anger, like a quenchless fire,  
Where time intensifies the flames of ire.

'T was in that time, near where the Temple stood,  
A maiden dwelt. She was an only child,  
And heir of all the prairies from the wood  
By Nacimiento River to the wild  
Of eastern hills—plantations fair and good,  
Whereon expanding fields of flowers smiled,  
Even in the winter days ; nor came there blight  
Of frosts to chase away the summer light.

She never knew her mother. By a plain  
Low bordering on a river 'neath the west,  
Where waft the winds and sigh o'er dreamy  
Spain,  
Her mother slept the sleep of endless rest.  
Above her grave the softly swelling strain  
Of music floats, like orisons of blest ;  
The birds are singing anthemed praise of song  
Through all the summer beautiful and long.

But she remembered not, the orphan child ;  
For she had never known. She never knew  
How over her a mother once had smiled  
And prayed with humble faith, and deep and  
true,  
That God would e'er be merciful and mild  
In all His judgments, and would ever strew  
The paths of life with kindness and with love,  
And send his care and solace from above.

She scarce remembered Spain. Her father fled  
From peril. And on the Pacific shore  
He sought a home ; and wealth around him spread  
In bountiful possessions more and more.  
His flocks and herds afar o'er pastures fed.  
His cottage stood anear the Temple door.  
And he had taught his child to kneel and pray  
Before the Temple shrine each dawning day.

Thus passed along the train of childhood hours,  
And she was happy as the days were bright.  
She trained with careful hands the climbing bowers  
That clustered o'er the windows in the light.  
Her garden walks were fringed along with flowers  
That gleamed and flashed upon the dazzled sight.  
She knew the names of all ; and in her care  
She tended all with kindness everywhere.

She grew in years and grew in loveliness ;  
And those who knew her held her more divine  
Than mortal—than the angels scarcely less—  
And, graced with pride and beauty and refine,  
A stranger seeing her might truly guess  
That she descended from a noble line,  
So beautiful in bearing and in form,  
With sympathy and love forever warm.

Years wrought their change in other lands, as well  
As in the plan and purpose of her own.  
On Spain's devoted shore disasters fell—  
The king a fugitive without a throne.  
The Man of Destiny with magic spell  
Above the sinking nations towered alone.

The old was past away, and all was new.  
The drift of tides, no mortal could pursue.

Her father left her and returned to Spain,  
To seek if something might not yet be saved  
Of wealth that once was his ; since now the reign  
Of tyrants was no more—a land enslaved  
Had torn its fetters off, and with disdain  
Looked back on degradation—proudly braved  
The elements of anarchy and strife,  
And hailed the coming of its newer life.

And she was left alone. But kindest care  
Was promised by the priest. Yet not alone ;  
Her friends were true and tried, and everywhere  
Were those who loved her as they loved their  
own.

The gardens round about were rich and rare,  
And blooming forests waving toward Jolon  
Entranced the landscape, and a beauty gave,  
And undulations rolled like many a wave.

The springtime and the summer came and past .  
And she was waiting for the ship's return  
To bring her father home. The shadows cast,  
Forboded winter's coming. Fain to burn  
A few days more, the brightest and the last  
Of autumn days in sunshine paused to yearn  
In their departing, for the happier yore—  
The hours of gladness gone forevermore.

He came no more. A rumor like a blight  
Came back and said that he would come no more.

For he had perished in the ghastly fight,  
Amid the tumult and the rush and roar  
Of Zoragoza, where, like plunge of night,  
Whole nations sank in death and all was o'er ;  
And triumph came upon the wings of death,  
And sinking kingdoms gasped for dying breath.

Indeed alone ! And none in all the earth,  
It seemed to her was left. In sad despair  
Her thoughts went back unto her land of birth ;  
But none, alas, were waiting for her there !  
The world now held no solace and no mirth,  
And no surcease of sorrow and of care.  
She was alone, in all the world, alone !  
And every hope was crushed and every promise  
flown.

“Thy cheek is pale, wherefore so pale to-day ?”  
The priest would ask her, and her wordless sigh  
Would tell of sorrow more than words could say ;  
And to her grief the priest would lend reply :  
“’T were better now to kneel and humbly pray ;  
The tempest that betides thee will pass by.  
Then lift in prayer to heaven thy trusting face,  
And God will grant to thee sustaining grace.”

She prayed. She knelt and prayed with fervent  
heart,

And all her soul was wrapped in silent prayer.  
And her petition was : “My trust Thou art ;  
Be merciful to me in my despair ;  
And guide my erring feet lest they depart  
From duty’s paths. Be with me everywhere.

For I am left alone, and tempest-tost ;  
Without Thy care I am forever lost."

One word of silent prayer in earnest trust  
Is worth eternity of soulless form,  
And words without devotion. From the dust  
A soul can be uplifted to the warm  
And peaceful light of truth. We cannot thrust  
Ourselves to heaven, nor stop the raging storm.  
Another Hand must guide us, and will guide.  
A rest will come at last, though storms betide.

The orphan knelt in prayer. When she arose  
She felt a calmer trust. "'T is not in vain  
This prayer of thine. Forever unto those  
Who pray believing, cometh a refrain  
Of blessedness from Heaven ; and the woes  
That so oppressed us can no longer chain ;  
And we are free. Grace cometh from on high  
To those who ask it, pleading lest they die."

So spake the priest, and she his words believed.  
And truly did he speak, though darkest crime  
Was howling in his soul. But ne'er deceived,  
She trusted with an earnestness sublime,  
And felt that much had been by prayer achieved,  
And much was yet in store for future time.  
Those who themselves are true are last to think  
How near their feet may tread a hidden brink.

Gold, gold, 't was still of gold, and gold,  
And gold forever that the visions came

Across his dreaming. Sins of depth untold

He lief would do, nor feel a blush of shame,  
If his reward was wealth. His heart was cold

As Iceland's cliffs, his blood as hot as flame ;  
One chilled by avarice, by passion fired  
The other, and together they conspired.

Then marvel not if the avenging rod

Smote sorely on his unprotected head.

For know ye this : There is in heaven a God

Whose vengeance falleth terrible and dread.

'T were better lot to be a soulless clod

Than man denied by Heaven. The earth we  
tread

Is to be envied. For the gulf is deep,

The night is dark, and blinding tempests sweep.

" Thy father's soul is lost. Alone by prayer

'T is possible that yet it may be well.

'T is possible to conquer dark despair,

And save a spirit from a yawning hell."

So spoke the priest. " Beside the altar there

Kneel down and pray." She knelt. The lamp-  
light fell

But dimly in the Temple, vaguely shone.

The night was deeply dark. They were alone.

She prayed the prayer which from her earliest years

She e'er had prayed when storms had filled the  
skies ;

When griefs oppressed, and loneliness and fears,

And restlessness would in her soul arise.

She prayed in earnestness. The blinding tears  
Brought something of relief, and filled her eyes.  
It was the prayer the priest had taught her ; now  
She breathed it fervently with burning brow.

Strike ! Heaven ! Too late. The deed is done.  
And low

The child is dying by the altar shrine.  
She sank without a moan beneath a blow,  
And all was over. Candles dimly shine  
With ghostly gleam upon the scene of woe.

And she was dead. Those features half divine  
Were calm and beautiful, though still in death.  
None fairer ever breathed with mortal breath.

The deed was done. And done for cursèd gold,  
That bright damnation which has ever curst  
The race of men with tragedies untold,  
Till what hath started well hath ended worst.  
The priest stood silent, and, with features cold,  
Looked calmly on. For this was not the first  
Of awful crimes that he had looked upon,  
In other nights which now were past and gone.

The fields and prairies rolling fair and far  
He hoped to make his own. The child was dead.  
No one would claim them now. Her kindred are  
No longer on the earth ; and in their stead  
He now would hold. No law there was to bar  
Him from the heritage. He did not dread  
Earth's mutiny ; for what he 'd wished so long  
Was his at last with title sure and strong.

It was the hour of midnight deep and lone.

The Temple door was closed. The world was  
still,

Save ever and anon the sobbing moan

Of winds that wandered onward with a chill,  
And whispered round the gloomy walls of stone,

And passed away, and came again, until  
Their murmurs were incessant, sad, and low,  
Like spirits sobbing in a voice of woe.

Like Moloch standing in the gloom of hell

And gloating on his ruin and his hate ;  
So stood the priest where dimly, weirdly fell

The lamplight round the altar's silver gate.  
None knew the deed, and none could ever tell.

The stormy night was deep and dark and late,  
And all the world was hushed. He was alone.  
None knew the deed. It never could be known.

If Heaven held no vengeance in its store

For such as thee, thou priest, it might be so.  
Thou art deceived. Deceive thyself no more.

The noonday light will look on all we know.  
'T were easier to hide the ocean's roar,

Or smother down the winds that rage and blow,  
Than to conceal a crime as black as thine—  
The light through every gloom at last will shine.

But, hardened in his heart like Egypt's king,

The priest feared nothing. He had planned it all,  
Through every minor and minutest thing ;  
And nothing more was left that could befall.

He felt not conscience lash, remorse's sting.

He heard no voices in his nature call  
For mercy—even for the dead. The door  
Of human love was barred forevermore.

With noiseless work—all things had been prepared—

He pried the pulpit from the floor, and drew  
The planks aside,—about him fiercely glared,—  
Then, to the pit beneath, the corse he threw.  
To make concealment certain naught was spared.

He fitted down the floor in order true.  
The pulpit sat again within its place,  
Till of what had been done there was no trace.

And finished now. He stood and long surveyed  
With brutal visage. Finished what begun.  
About him fell the lamplight and the shade.

And even the shadows seemed to shrink and  
shun  
From that dread midnight deed. But he had  
made

His plans, and all were perfect. He had done  
The deed at last. He stood awhile to gloat :  
A guilty conscience now no longer smote.

The morning dawned on Paso Robles shore.

“Where is the child?” was questioned everywhere.

They missed her ; and they questioned more and  
more,

With dark misgivings and with anxious care.

They sought the meadows through, the mountains  
o'er.

Anxiety was deepened to despair.  
On hill and mountain they had called her name,  
And in the valley, but no answer came.

"The child, O where!" An echo answered  
"where!"

To those who called; and all again was still.  
"Some savage beast has dragged her to his lair,  
And she is dead and mangled!" and a chill  
Of stony horror more than man could bear  
Rent through them as they spoke. From hill to  
hill  
They hurried, scarcely knowing where they went;  
And far and near swift messengers were sent.

The country all from Nacimiento strand  
To Margarita joined in the alarms.  
Through every copse and forest of the land  
Searched troops of men in haste, with horse and  
arms.

They beat along the jungles, traced the sand  
Along the river banks, and o'er the farms  
From mountain unto mountain. But in vain.  
No trace of her was found on hill or plain.

The priest was foremost in the search, and went  
Where forests were the densest, and he led  
The bravest bands of men, and ever sent  
The bravest of them all where panthers fled,

To search the cause—what all this gathering meant  
Of savage beasts. Or else he went instead,  
Close followed by the rest the caves among,  
Which with the dint and clang forever rung.

The night came down, and all had been in vain.  
No traces of the child were found ; and none  
Knew whence again to turn o'er hill and plain,  
Or what upon the morrow best were done.  
With hearts that sadly beat with grief and pain  
They lay them down to wait the rising sun.  
The priest into the Temple went to pray  
That God would still be merciful for aye.

They sought upon the morrow till the night,  
And weary and despairing came they back,  
And gave her up as lost. Nor on the sight,  
Nor on the hearing was there trace or track  
To guide or lead them in the path aright.  
The darkness hovered over deep and black,  
And hid the world ; and winds were sobbing low  
Their nightfall monodies of death and woe.

Then came the priest and waved his hand to all  
And bade them follow him. They followed him.  
He led them through the Temple's gloomy wall  
To inner sanctuary dark and dim,  
Where fitful gleams of candles ever fall  
On images in sculpture old and grim  
From niches in the masonry around,  
From fretted ceilings to the dingy ground.

They gathered all, and waited in the gloom  
As silent as the spirits of the dead  
Who wait to hear the whisper of their doom,  
From which. they cannot shrink, though deep  
and dread.

The sanctuary seemed a mighty tomb,  
Like Memphis catacombs whose chambers spread  
Where sunshine of the summer never fell,  
And never sounded tone of Sabbath bell.

The priest arose, and rising bade them kneel.  
They sank upon their knees at his command.  
“O God,” he prayed, “may we Thy presence feel—  
Protect us in the hollow of Thine hand.  
Unto us now Thy tender love reveal,  
That we Thy judgments just may understand ;  
And teach us, lest we murmur and lament  
At this, the chastisement that Thou hast sent.

“’Tis hard to bear, but Thou for us didst bear  
All this and more. Forbid that we complain.  
Forbid that we should sink into despair,  
Though weighed upon with anguish and with  
pain.

Teach us to feel that Thou art everywhere  
A God of love and mercy, not disdain ;  
And guide us in the paths of truth and right,  
For we will trust Thee in the storm and night.

“And God of mercy, infinite and just,  
In this our sad bereavement stoop to hear

Our humble prayer, for we are naught but dust,  
Unworthy to approach Thy throne so near.  
Teach us submission—not because we must,  
But for the sake of Him who loved us dear ;  
And chide us not, if we should erring speak—  
The heart is willing but the flesh is weak.

“ And for the sake of Him who for us died,  
Stretch forth Thy mighty arm in power to save.  
We weep for one, our loved one and our pride :  
If she has perished, guide us to her grave ;  
And if she lives, us to her rescue guide,  
For sake of Him who in compassion gave  
His life for us, yet lives again on high,  
Triumphant over death, no more to die—— ”

He would have further prayed, but answer came  
More soon than he had thought. While yet he  
prayed,  
Along the east horizon livid flame  
Of lightning, quivering and rising, played  
From cloud to cloud. They saw. They breathed  
the name  
Of heaven's God, all trembling and dismayed.  
They saw the storm, and felt its burning breath.  
The priest gazed eastward, standing pale as death.

Struck speechless now, across the void he gazed  
Toward clouds that rolled along the mountain  
height,  
Where one incessant sheet of lightning blazed  
With brightness painful to the blinded sight.

All motionless the people stood amazed,  
Rapt in the terrors of the burning night,  
Which from the east came with unearthly roar  
Of thunders bellowing along the shore.

The fitful gleam of candles from the shrine  
Where stood the priest, no more their twilight  
cast,  
So vivid did the sheeted lightning shine  
Through ponderous windows in their glow aghast.  
Huge clouds along the earth in blazing line  
Rolled nearer, threatening and thick and fast ;  
Like doom will come in that avenging day  
When earth in flames and fire shall melt away.

One looked upon the other, knowing not  
If time was at an end, or if the sky  
Had changed to fire, and fallen seething hot  
Upon the earth that both at once might die.  
All human hopes and passions were forgot  
In that dread hour. And upward went a cry  
For mercy—'t was a wild and shrieking prayer  
Of mingled penitence and dark despair.

For even now the hurricane had burst  
Against the Temple. Reeled the mighty walls ;  
And he who saw might know not which would first  
Be overthrown—the Sanctum, or the halls  
Of outer court. "God's vengeance ! We are curst !"  
Cried out the priest, like one whom death appalls,  
And from the Temple fled. The heavy door  
That closed behind him, bursted with a roar,

By lightning riven. Then through the rugged rent  
The thunder made, into the night they rushed ;  
And cries and shrieks for mercy upward went,  
Lost in the tumult where the tempest crushed  
Through architraves, careened, and warped, and  
bent,  
And with the lightning's tinges fiery-flushed ;  
And rocking battlements were overthrown  
In mingled mass of rude and sculptured stone.

They flung themselves supine upon the ground ;  
For none the mad tornado could withstand.  
The cyclones and the whirlwinds roared around,  
And through the vales and valleys of the strand.  
The thunders bellowed in the deep profound  
And sent a quiver through the conscious land ;  
And flames of lightning lit the depths of night,  
As though a thousand worlds were blazing bright,

Then passed away. The morning dawned at last  
With gleam of sadness, but of beauty soft.  
The playful light came stealing, and was cast  
Across the valleys wide, as whilom oft.  
Against the east the mountain heights were massed  
And toward the peaceful heavens rose aloft.  
No passing cloud was drifting in the sky  
That arched the earth serenely from on high.

From fright and fear recovering, returned  
The natives to behold their ruined Fane.

They saw the track that lightning brands had  
burned

In the wrecked columns scattered o'er the plain.  
The Holy of the Holies had been spurned

By whirlwinds infidel in their disdain ;  
And images of saints were rudely thrown  
At random through the mass of broken stone.

They scarcely might discern the place where stood

The altar, where the priest so late had prayed  
With voice of earnestness that Heaven should

In mercy lend deliverance and aid.  
All that remained was front of ebon-wood  
In which were gilded panels deeply laid.  
Naught else was found ; and even this was flung  
A furlong off, and in a thicket hung.

But where the shrine had stood, they came and saw

The child, and she was calm and pale and dead.  
They gathered round with sympathy and awe.

Her white hand rested on her wounded head.  
They silent stood, like those who scarce will draw  
A breath, lest they disturb. No word was said,  
But stood they speechless there, unknowing why  
Their hearts were questioning ; but no reply.

Then they remembered how the priest in prayer

Had pled to Him who life and beauty gave,  
And who a refuge is from every care :

“ If she has perished, guide us to her grave.”  
The prayer was answered, though it brought despair  
Upon them like the wrath of ocean wave.

They stood and trembled ; for they felt how dread  
That vengeance is which striketh for the dead.

But where now was the priest ? None there could  
say.

No one had seen him since he wildly ran  
From out the Temple in the lightning ray  
That lit the darkness when the storm began.  
Into the night beyond he fled away,  
With visage wilder far, and ghostlier than  
The fronting of the storm ; and in the night  
A moment more, and he was lost from sight.

“ No doubt,” they spoke, “ he perished in the storm,  
And ere the morning dawn his life was o’er.  
Perchance, beyond the woods his pallid form  
Is motionless in death forevermore.  
The sun that shines along the prairies warm  
Shines not for him who lieth on the shore,  
Perhaps, of Nacimiento, where the tide  
Will whisper tenderly for him that died.”

Just where the altar stood, a grave they made  
For her who in her life they loved so well ;  
And to her dreamless rest they gently laid  
Her down. But over her no funeral knell  
Was rung ; and no one knelt for her and prayed—  
They knew not how to pray,—but low the well  
Of sobbing voices told how deeply felt  
The loss of her had been, though no one knelt.

The grave was humble, and unto this day  
It may be seen, if thou but turn aside

When thou art passing through that lonely way  
Where battlements lie scattered far and wide.  
Some broken walls yet standing grim and gray  
Have long the whirlwinds and the storm defied,  
And still defy, though toppling, rude and old,  
Foundations overgrown with moss and mold.

And poison weeds grow now where aisles once led  
Along the sculptured halls ; and down below,  
If thou pass not with care, thou mightest tread  
Upon the sacred urns of long ago.  
It seemeth the dominion of the dead  
In desolation and in voiceless woe.  
And wandering there, the dreariness will press  
Upon thee with a weight of sad distress.

The region seemeth lonely far around.  
On every side the trees are dwarfed and dry.  
A haze is hanging ever o'er the ground,  
And dull above it bends the sullen sky.  
Naught may be heard save low and dreamy sound  
Of winds that from the southward wander by,  
And mingle with the distance faint and far  
From dawn of day till shines the vesper star.

They made the grave; then turned away and fled,  
And felt the land was curst forevermore ;  
Nor looked behind them, but with awe and dread,  
In their swift flight from Nacimiento's shore,  
They followed paths which o'er the mountains led,  
And left forever home and land of yore ;  
And builded newer homes beyond the Lake  
Where billows of Tulare gently break.

The priest fled not with them. A maniac,  
No human thoughts or hopes were left him now.  
He haunted forests deep and dense and black,  
Where mournful winds wept under branch and  
bough,  
Along the dreariness of mountain track ;  
While chilled forever was his death-cold brow ;  
And terrified his look, and ghastly white,  
Like one who shrinks in terror and in fright.

That burst of lightning through the riven wall  
The night the Temple fell, had set him wild ;  
And since that hour no sound of foot could fall  
But that he turned, lest it should be the child.  
His dreams were terrible, and might appall  
The demons where the wastes of death are piled  
With spectres, in the land beneath the night,  
Where burning torments lend their baleful light.

And howling through the jungles of the west  
From Nacimiento to the San Antone,  
He roamed where savage beasts the plain infest  
And tunnel deep in pits and caves of stone.  
And there at night he slept a fitful rest,  
Disturbed forever by his weary moan.  
Nor feared he beast, or man, or God, or death,  
Nor aught of mortal or immortal breath.

'T was thus for years, and he had been forgot  
By all that ever knew him. Far away  
Where burn the foothill cañons, fierce and hot,  
In sultry summer, all forgot were they

Whom once he knew. A madman's fearful lot  
Is terrible at best, and cursed for aye,  
And those who never felt, can never know  
What maniacs may feel of nameless woe.

The fleet vaqueros who at seasons rode  
Those broken valleys and those jungles through,  
At times had seen him far from man's abode ;  
And they on coursers swift would oft pursue.  
And as he ran, like spectre's backward flowed  
His hair as white as snow. They never knew  
His story, who he was or whence he came,  
His destiny, his purpose, or his name.

They scarce believed—perhaps, did not believe—  
That he was human—rather more a ghost—  
When they had seen him in the dusk of eve  
Come from his hiding-place along the coast,  
And rush across the waste, where mists deceive  
So that what nearest is seems distant most.  
But they upon his trail would fearless dash,  
Till rocks beneath would clang, and flame, and  
flash.

And, though with headlong speed upon his trail  
The horsemen would give chase, it was in vain.  
Pursuit the swiftest was of no avail ;  
He would elude them, and would safely gain  
The thickets dark. And then with piercing wail,  
Half triumph, half despair, he 'd plunge amain  
Into the tangled copse and disappear,  
And leave them in misgivings, doubt, and fear.

Thus through the land about the rumor went  
That Paso Robles Plains were haunted ground.  
And fear and superstition credence lent  
To every story heard the country round,  
Till in that region far no herdsman's tent,  
Or human habitation, might be found.  
Some southward fled, some east, some northward  
fled ;  
They who fear not the living, fear the dead.

Full many a summer in its fever-heat  
Had burnt along the valleys, and had passed.  
Full many a winter storm with tempest-beat  
Its shadows o'er the desert land had cast.  
Full many a wanderer with weary feet  
Had crossed the woodland solitude, aghast  
At all the desolation and the gloom  
Which hung above, like silence o'er a tomb.

And still the maniac was roaming there,  
Companion of the panthers, and the scream  
Of savage beasts from many a rocky lair  
Where never falleth sunshine's faintest gleam.  
Forevermore he moaned in low despair  
Like one tormented in a smothering dream.  
And, at the hour of evenfall alone,  
He 'd rush and leap from out his den of stone.

Though years had bent him down, yet tottering age  
Had not subdued him. He would not repent.  
It may be so, that he who turns the page  
Of fearless blasphemy with dark intent,

No more can find repentance. Then the rage  
Of deep depravity, like fever sent,  
May be the burning that will sear the soul  
With quenchless fire and flame beyond control.

The fate of him must be a dreadful dark  
Who hath defied the vengeance of a God.  
From out his soul is blotted every spark  
Of human feeling. He 's a lifeless clod—  
A wasted hope—a wreck—a stranded bark,—  
But conscious ever of the threatening rod,  
Which at the last will crush the vital breath,  
And scourge the ruin down to endless death.

'T were better—if eternity is true—  
That he had never lived, if he must hear  
Behind him evermore the blight pursue  
And rush with mercy none, more near and near.  
'T were better had he perished ere he knew  
That state of refuge none, and endless fear,  
That deathly gloom where light is never known,  
That dark despair whence every hope hath flown.

The aged priest stood on the river shore,  
The shore of Nacimiento, whence the tide  
Had sunken in the channel's thirsty floor,  
A desert wasted, desolate and wide ;  
And one might think that floods would come no  
more  
Adown that mighty course, all parched and dried  
By sultry winds that blow unceasing there  
Along the burning earth and shimmering air.

The priest stood motionless in deepest gloom.

The summer furnace glowed with livid fire.  
A tempest raged, and winds like rushing doom,  
Swept up the Nacimiento in their ire.

Huge drifts of sand were rolling tomb on tomb

Before the blast, and piling higher and higher,  
And clouds of dust were driven fiercely by,  
Till even the sun was blotted from the sky.

The priest stood there, and looked across the blast ;

And o'er his face the shadows of despair  
Like depths of night forever came and past  
With rack and torment more than man could  
bear.

The billowed storm was rolling wild and fast,

And dimming earth and heaven from the glare  
Of sun and day, and beating in its blight  
Along the shadows of the phantom night.

“Great God !” with hollow voice at last he spoke.

He thought to pray, but praying was denied.  
His tongue refused to speak. His spirit broke  
In naming God whom he had long defied.

The terrors of his doom anew awoke ;

And in his anguish and despair he cried  
For death to shield him, for he could not live ;—  
His doom was done ; and Heaven would not for-  
give.

He prayed to death and all the depths of night.

His prayer seemed answered ; but he shrunk  
away,

And toward the realms of truth and upper light  
He raised his soul and tried again to pray.  
Into his face like some eternal blight

His prayer was flung unheard. And in dismay  
He turned in supplication back to death,  
That it would smother out his burning breath.

Hell lavishes its mercies like its fire

To those who ask them. Prayer is ne'er in vain  
When made for ruin and for mad desire.

The answer cometh soon with balm of bane ;  
And in the nearer rush of din and dire,

The herald bursts with shriek and yell amain  
Upon the vision of the one whose prayer  
Hath called the spectres up from dark despair.

The priest plunged in the storm, adown the shore,  
Into the floodless river, where the blast  
Raved round him like a deluge ; and the roar  
Was like the ocean where the waves are cast  
O'er sunken reefs. Despair had seized him more.

He was resolved this day should be his last.  
He meant to perish and receive the worst  
That afterworlds can heap upon the curst.

His hair and beard, as white as winter snow,

Streamed on the storm a moment ere the wave  
Of simoon dust came onward from below,  
And overwhelmed him in a desert grave,  
Closing forever o'er his earthly woe,

And answer to his last petition gave.  
His doom was given. That moment was his last.  
He perished in the storm that hurried past.

'T was years and years ago, yet wasted all  
Are plain and prairie from the bluff and hill  
That rise on the horizon like a wall,  
To eastern borders where Salinas still  
Flows onward, out beyond the Temple wall,  
Beyond the empty courts where thistles fill  
The spaces of the sanctum and the aisles,  
And cluster thickly round the crumbling piles.

When thou from Paso Robles toward the mouth  
Of Nacimiento shalt thy way pursue ;  
When from the Springs of Sulphur in the south  
Thou pass the Region of the Valleys through,  
Look o'er the land that withers in the drouth,  
And thou wilt then believe the story true.  
Thou wilt contrast that realm of voiceless gloom  
With what it was when clad in summer bloom.

The world may doubt the tale, but thou wilt not.  
The world may question. Thou wilt not deny.  
The fallen architraves may be forgot,  
And in the matted jungle hidden lie ;  
And over them the summer fierce and hot  
May blow its breath till vines and verdure die.  
But yet the story of the past will rise  
Like a mirage against the summer skies.

## AFAR.

I AM lonely to-night, and my thoughts are away  
In a land where the springtime is fair,  
Where the river is sweeping as bright as the day  
By the home of Mabel Saint Clair.

I have passed through the shadows of sadness and  
woe,  
And my days have been gloomy and lone ;  
I have thought of the bliss of the long, long ago  
That has vanished away, and none ever can know,  
Like a vision whose brightness has flown.

I am lonely to-night, and I 'm thinking of thee,  
My beautiful Mabel Saint Clair ;  
And I think what has been and can nevermore be,  
And beyond are the shades of despair.

Thou hast strolled by the river this even, I know,  
Where the breezes were gentle and mild,  
Where the lisp of the river was peaceful and low  
On the sands of the shore where the ebbing and  
flow  
In the light of the eventime smiled.

Then didst thou remember, or didst thou forget,  
How, in the days that forever are past,

How oft at the eve by the river we met,  
How often the sun o'er mountain has set,  
And shadows around us were cast ?

And the stars in their beauty were shining above  
From the fields of the limitless sky ;  
And the zephyrs came whispering whispers of love  
As soft as the breath of a sigh.

My Mabel Saint Clair,  
With golden hair,  
My Mabel as pure as the wafts of the air  
From the far-away mountains of snow !  
When the evening was mild, and the river was fair,  
We lingered together in happiness there,  
Till the beamings of light  
From the stars of the night  
Quaked in the river below.

I am lonely to-night, and my dreams are afar,  
They are far, far away from me now.  
Art thou gazing to-night on the sheen of that star  
That quakes as it breaks in the wake of the bar,  
Where the river is gleaming,  
And glowing and flowing ;  
And all the perfuming  
Of roses and lilies,  
Distilling their sweetness, and thrilling and filling  
The air  
With their odors and fragrance  
Are blooming,  
To laden the winds that play o'er the way,

And to lavish their blisses  
In tenderest kisses  
Upon thy fair brow,  
My beautiful Mabel Saint Clair ?

Thou wilt sometime remember  
When in the September  
The river is silent, or sweeping, or sleeping,  
And o'er it the branches extending, and bending,  
Are changing to sere  
With the age of the year—  
Then thy memory will range  
Through the ruins of change ;  
And again by the tide  
Thou wilt be at my side,  
When the evening is glowing,  
And breezes are blowing,  
And songs through the silence  
Are coming and going,  
My beautiful Mabel Saint Clair.

But, alas, it is never. We have parted forever,  
I never shall meet thee or greet thee again.  
It were better for me—  
And 't were better for thee  
To dissever forever and ever from me ;  
'T were the best for us both, and for thee it were  
best,  
So gentle, confiding, and trusting and true—  
Adieu to thee now and forever, adieu,  
My beautiful, beautiful Mabel Saint Clair !

## ADA.

WHERE the willows shade the clover  
In the meadows by the rills ;  
Where the sunlight flashes over  
Verdant valleys, blooming hills ;  
There it is that Ada ever  
Lingers when the days are fair,  
'Mid alfileria blossoms  
Round about her everywhere ;  
She the gladdest and the brightest  
And the truest and the best,  
Maiden fairest of the fairest  
In the country of the West !

Never fairer, never truer  
Hath on earth a maiden been ;  
Laughing eyes were never bluer,  
Spirit freer ne'er from sin !  
All that 's best and brightest, fairest,  
Loveliest and debonair,  
All are hers, my bright and beauteous  
Ada with the golden hair—  
All that 's lovely is united  
In her smile and in her words,  
Thoughtful ever, but as merry  
As the singing summer birds.

What the merit in believing  
That there is a fairy clime  
Sung by poets, idly weaving  
Fancies into music rhyme ?  
What the merit in believing  
That along the fairy strand  
Spirits 'mong the trees and shadows  
Play fantastic hand in hand ?  
What the merit in forgetting  
Truer life for such a theme,  
Thinking not of mortal beauty  
In the rapture of our dream ?

Idle all, invalid dreaming,  
Vain and more than vain to me,  
All the sunshine and the seeming  
Over fairy clime and sea—  
For 't is all an idle fancy—  
Ada, thou art ever true,  
Not a phantom or a fancy  
To depart as fancies do ;  
But a loving, trusting maiden,  
Young and beautiful and fair,  
Glad as is the world about thee,  
Smiles and brightness everywhere.

Others have been false ; but never  
Wilt thou be as others are.  
Thou wilt be the same forever,  
Though I wander from thee far.  
Thou I know wilt not forget me  
Though all others shall forget.

In the past thou wast the truest,  
Thou wilt be the truest yet.  
Thou wilt not forsake me, scorn me,  
As my friends have done before.  
Thou wilt be the trusting, truest  
Maiden of the Golden Shore.

Then, remember me, forgetting  
Not when I am far away ;  
When the sun of eve is setting  
And the shadows fleck the way ;  
When along the fields, and over  
Hills the shades of darkness steal ;  
When the night is hushed, and lowly  
Thou in humble prayer shalt kneel.  
Then one thought I claim, my truest,  
Thou the kindest and the best—  
Thou the fairest of the fairest  
In the country of the West.

---

#### THE BRIDGE OF NIHILVIDEO.

JUST beneath the glittering glaciers where eternal  
snows are piled  
Round the summit of a mountain, rising upward  
fierce and wild ;  
From a crevice deep and icy underneath the drifted  
snows,  
Under cliffs and hanging ledges, there a crystal  
fountain flows.  
And the fountain leaps in gladness down, and  
down, and further down,

Over floors of shining mica, blended with the  
granite brown ;  
Playing onward, lightly lispings in the sun's serener  
kiss,  
Till 't is lost in Nihilvideo's dread and fathomless  
abyss.  
Where that crystal stream is welling, says the story  
that is told,  
Once was all a glittering galaxy of sands of shining  
gold ;  
'Mong the rocks and 'mong the eddies, in the  
whirlpool and the spray,  
Gleamed the golden sands as brightly as the rain-  
bows of the day—  
All along the shores of brightness, and the deeper  
shores of brown,  
Richer set than gems bedecking Syracuse's tyrant's  
crown.

And the long and silent ages voiceless came and  
passed away,  
Bringing epicycled changes, spring and summer  
and decay ;  
Bringing winter's avalanches rushing down the  
mountain side,  
Bearing ruin all before and spreading downward  
far and wide.  
And the little brook was dashing still along from  
stone to stone,  
Lispings to itself, contented in its solitude alone.  
Human steps had never trodden up the roughness  
of the steep ;

Human eyes had never seen the crystal waters purl  
and leap ;  
Human thirst for gain had never pillaged o'er the  
shining sands ;  
All there rested unmolested in the snowy mountain  
lands.

But they came at last, the daring men who never  
turn or yield  
Till all mysteries are laid open and all secrets are  
revealed.  
Came they then and ransacked over all the moun-  
tains wild and bleak,  
Found the vein of quartz, and traced it upward  
toward the angry peak ;  
Traced it over ridge and cañon, up the deep and  
cold ravine,  
Where the dazzling drifts were lying, and no eye  
had ever seen.

It was theirs ! The rude despoilers in their ecsta-  
sies and joys  
Saw the golden sands about them, laughed and  
clapped their hands like boys.  
They forgot the weary toiling upward from the  
river tide  
Far beneath them, where the roaring in the distant  
depths had died.

Hast thou seen that depth abysmal—human eye  
hath seldom seen—  
Hast thou seen that yawning cañon, Nihilvideo's  
dark ravine ?

Never. Lest thy feet have trodden paths of peril  
and of dread,  
Leading through the gloomy mountains, by the  
torrent's raving bed ;  
Underneath the hanging summits, 'gainst the brow  
of cliff and ledge,  
On the giddy rocks impending o'er the raging  
river's edge.  
If that pathway thou hast trodden, then perchance  
thou partly know  
Of the threatening terrors frowning over that abys-  
mal woe.  
They who never saw can never know the darkness  
and the gloom  
Of that deep and twilight cañon, yawning like  
creation's tomb.

O'er the gulf of Nihilvideo they a bridge of ropes  
had spanned,  
Cleated to the cliffs, projecting o'er the chasm on  
either hand.  
Looking upward from the river, facing cliffs from  
side to side  
Seemed to touch almost, asundered scarce a half a  
fathom wide.  
But to him who on the summit stood, no more they  
seemed to meet,  
But were parted in their hate sublime four hundred  
yawning feet.  
Far beneath, the foam was flying like a storm of  
driven snow,

O'er the rocks that vexed the river down three  
thousand feet below.

Like a thread the rope-bridge swayed, and seemed  
no firmer than a thread

Stretched from cliff to cliff across the roaring  
river's cañon bed.

Only two the tightened cables, and the bridgeway  
was complete,

One to cling to with the hands, the other for the  
fearless feet.

He who stood beside the river looking upward  
through the shade,

Could not see the bridge above him, save it by the  
winds was swayed

And the sunlight dazzled on it ; then the thread of  
silver bright

Seemed to float across the cañon glowing in the  
upper light,

Looking like a gossamer upon a dewy summer lawn,  
Brilliant while the sun is shining in the brightness  
of the dawn.

Yet across this dreadful bridge the daring miners  
took their way

To and from the snowy mountain at the morn and  
close of day.

Battlemented walls were fronting, frowning back  
and forth in rage,

Seamed and scarred by storms and earthquakes,  
and by deluge and by age.

If the one who crossed grew dizzy at the yawning  
depth below,

He looked upward at the sky, or clouds, or stars,  
or peaks of snow,  
And passed onward to the rock-crag where the  
feet could find a rest  
On the column-clustered pillars of the mountains of  
the West.

In the morning when the sun had lighted up the  
glacier streaks,  
Eagles swooped from hidden eyries, and went  
screaming 'mong the peaks,  
Wheeling round and round the summits. They  
were angry to be first  
Of the monarchs of the mountains where no human  
ever durst ;  
To be tyrants of the wilderness where cedars  
dwarfed and old  
In the crevices and cliffs with roots like twisted  
iron hold—  
Hold with crook'd and cramped defiance in de-  
crepitude of age,  
Hanging there and mocking tempests in their end-  
less rush and rage.

When the eagles found the bridge suspended there  
from wall to wall,  
They flew rushing, screaming round it with their  
hoarsely demon call,  
Rising high above and plunging down in gyratory  
curve,  
Fierce and furious to find that human had such  
skill and nerve ;

Beating with their wings the bridge, and battling  
    with a hate and wrath,  
Like the jungle lion tears the snares found set  
    along its path.

It was autumn. It was twilight. Sunken was the  
    evening sun,  
And the weary miners rested. Labor for the day  
    was done.  
Darkness settled down around them, and the sky  
    was blue above ;  
And the moon was softly shining with a light of  
    peace and love ;  
Stars were beaming pale and tranquil over silent  
    rocks that threw  
Shadows down along the mountain where the  
    ancient cedars grew.

It was twilight. And the miners in the shade of  
    cliff and ridge,  
Rested ere they sought their camps beyond the  
    giddy, swaying bridge.  
Suddenly the flash of pistols broke from every  
    boulder shade,  
And the miners fell unconscious—in eternal death  
    were laid.  
All but one. He headlong downward o'er a high  
    and rocky wall  
Flung himself. A clump of tangled manzanita  
    broke the fall ;  
And he lay concealed, and listened as the robbers  
    downward rushed.

To secure the spoils and plunder, with their savage  
victory flushed.

Then he knew the voice of Basques, and the story  
all was told :

They were bandits from Penoché pillaging the  
mines for gold.

Paused they but a moment viewing that the dead  
were dead indeed,

Then rushed down the winding pathway toward  
the camp with hurried speed.

And he heard them, and their words were, borne  
upon the air afar :

“ *Esta bueno ! Esta bueno ! Bueno tiempo de senar !* ” \*

Up he sprang with gleaming dagger in that desper-  
ate design,

Followed them adown the pathway under bough of  
fir and pine,

Like a panther on their footsteps, under brow of  
cliff and ridge,

And came up while they were crossing o’er the  
creaking, swinging bridge.

In his hate he looked out at them. Not a word he  
breathed or spoke ;

But he with his trenchant dagger slashed the cables,  
and they broke !

With a yell like tortured demons in the world of  
death and night,

\* This line, in the western dialect of the Spanish, may be  
liberally translated : “ All well ! All well ! A splendid time  
for supper ! ”

All went down with fearful cursings, and in mists  
were lost from sight.  
Plunged they down the dark abyss into the awful  
depth below ;  
Echoes answered back the dreadful groans of hor-  
ror and of woe.  
Echoes ceased, and all was over ; and the gulf be-  
neath was dark ;  
And the rocks that loomed above it hung in silence  
still and stark  
O'er the yawning chasm ; and far away there came  
a murmured moan  
Up the steep—it was the river chafing 'gainst its  
walls of stone.  
Then the night wind whispered softly. Moonbeams  
fell with gentle kiss  
On the wild cliffs frowning over Nihilvideo's dark  
abyss.

---

## DREAM ON.

GLAD dreams and beautiful  
Play round thee now.  
Garlands of happiness  
Crown thy young brow.  
While the moonbeam softly falls  
Calmly in the silent halls,  
Gleaming golden on the walls,  
Sleep, Ada May !

Dream dreams of crystal streams  
All the long night,

Till comes in peacefulness  
Still morning light.  
Dream not of care and pain,  
Dream not of sorrow's reign,  
Gladness shall never wane,  
Sweet Ada May.

Light wafts of fairy wings  
Fan thee to sleep,  
Forms from the shadowland  
Vigil shall keep.  
Softer moonbeams never fell,  
Lowest whispers seem to tell  
Love forever true and well,  
Sweet Ada May.

Peacefully and tenderly  
Dreams hover o'er ;  
Breathing blessings silently  
Forevermore.  
Wake not till morning bright  
Bathes thy brow of marble white  
In a gorgeous glow of light,  
Sweet Ada May.

---

## INANIS.

LIGHTLY, softly o'er the mists of morning  
Gleams the sunlight on the silent air ;  
And I know the winds that wander round thee  
Play more gladsomely when thou art there.

And my memories are thronging to thee  
In that land where flowers are blooming fair.  
Peace forevermore caress and bless thee  
Tenderly, my loved and lost Saint Clair.

Thou hast been too kind to e'er forget me ;  
Thou hast been more true than all the rest.  
Art thou lost from me, and lost forever ?  
Then why tell me all is for the best ?  
Why have I been banished and forsaken,  
Why exiled from realms of beauty blest ?  
Lost ! But not forever and forever,  
Sweet Saint Clair, bright angel of the West !

When thou 'rt waiting in the vesper gloaming  
By thine own deep river far away,  
Thou wilt then remember and remember  
Till thy musings blend with close of day.  
Ah, I see thee yet, as true and trusting  
As an angel kneeling down to pray ;  
Think not that 't is meant to grieve or chide thee,  
These impatient words that I may say.

Days are drearer now than when we parted  
Where that western river's waters flow ;  
For thou hast been more unkind and cruel  
Than thou wouldst be if thou couldst but know  
How the every word which thou hast spoken  
Comes again in echoes lone and low  
Through the gloom around my pathway ever,  
Whispering to me everywhere I go.

Fare thee well ! May roses and white lilies  
Bloom in beauty for thee everywhere,  
May each morning dawn for thee in splendor,  
Bringing peace and solace from thy care.  
'T were not well that thou shouldst know how often  
I have wished for thee a brighter share  
Of this world than is to mortals given—  
Fare thee well, my loved and lost Saint Clair.

---

## THE EARTHQUAKE'S PATH.

AND hast thou never stood upon the crest  
Of that bleak mountain, where eternal snow  
Drifts 'mong the rocks ? Behind thee, toward the  
west,

Two rivers down their gloomy gorges flow  
And reach the valley, far away and low  
Beneath the clouds that gather, and divide,  
And melt away, and go, and come, and go ;  
While near thee, round about on every side,  
Peaks rise into the heavens with stern and awful  
pride.

Stand there, and to the eastward turn thine eyes ;  
On the horizon's verge thou wilt behold  
A chain of mountain peaks that pierce the skies,  
So far away that every rugged mold  
Is melted into vagueness. Drear and old  
Although they be, thou wilt in rapture cry :  
“ That is the El Dorado realm of gold  
Burst in at last on vision, and there lie  
The lands Utopia between the earth and sky ! ”

More near, between thee and that mountain chain,  
To north and south monotonous expands  
A lifeless solitude, a dreary plain  
Of rocks half buried in the drifting sands  
Borne on the winds that blow from burning lands  
Beyond Majave ; and there comes no air  
Of springtime now ; and never mortal hands  
Shall raise by toil a span of beauty there ;  
For death hath conquered it, and death is every-  
where.

Adown this desolation winds afar  
The channel of a river—long ago  
A tideless path. O'er cataract and bar  
The floods no longer leap, and dash, and flow ;  
Dry now, forevermore it will be so.  
The torrents of the winter ne'er again  
Shall rush in rage ; and nevermore shall glow  
The sunshine on bright waters. Curséd then  
And curséd ever by anathemas of men !

From mountain unto mountain through this plain  
A rent abysmal runs ; thou mightest trace  
Its course from where thou standest, like a lane  
As far as eye can see, unto the base  
Of hills beyond the valley, where the face  
Of cliffs rise up amain. This is the road  
The earthquake made in its destroying race  
When it had bursted from its deep abode  
In nether fire, and fled its continental load.

That plain before thee was not always dead.  
That river channel was not always dry.

That path made by the earthquake when it fled  
Has not been there forever. On the sky  
That false mirage hath not uplifted high  
Its phantom shores forever. And the dust  
Hath not forever thus been drifting by  
Along the desert's harsh and grating crust,  
Eating away the rocks by erosion and by rust.

Far in the morning of the infant world,  
This plain, which now is dead, was gay with  
flowers.

Meandering brooks along its prairies purled,  
And whispered through the shade of blooming  
bowers.

The golden vision of the springtime hours  
Flowed like an ocean far on every side,  
And seemed to wash against the mountain  
towers ;

And tenderly the southern winds replied  
Along the flowing billows of the beauteous tide.

Along the restless river's either bank

The verdure stirred in summer's balmy breeze.  
Then graceful deer came down the shore and  
drank,

And blue quails sported underneath the trees.  
Might then be heard the drowsy hum of bees  
'Mong flowers innumerable, which far along  
Waved o'er the plains that rose and fell like seas  
Of blooming billows. Deep the swelling song  
Of birds with carol lays, now low, now full and  
strong.

The river's crystal flood passed idly by  
As pure as the ethereal realms of air ;  
And deep below it bent an azure sky  
Like that which bent above, as bright and fair.  
And flowers and trees were likewise pictured  
there,  
And, further back, the mountains' ponderous piles  
Blent with the panorama. Everywhere  
Were haloed clouds that passed like painted isles  
O'er mountain chains that stretched away a hundred miles.

Serenely fair and beautifully grand  
Was all that valley then. The far-off chain  
Of snowy hills looked down upon the land ;  
And peaks the farthest off were seen as plain  
As those most near. For distance laid no stain  
Or dimness on that scene. An Eden's shore,  
Though grand with many a myriad verdant fane  
As sung by bards of eld in sacred lore,  
Was not more beautiful, nor deeper brightness wore.

This was the Mono Valley in that age  
Of youth, before the fell destroyer came.  
It might have seemed an angel's heritage—  
But loveliness is vanished ; and the name  
Is all that now remains of former fame.  
It hath been stricken by an awful blight  
Which seared its virtue into changeless shame  
And overwhelmed the sunshine's holy light  
With tides of gloom that came like shadows of  
the night.

'T was fair—the springtime breathed with blandest  
breath—

'T was o'er—a stillness fell—the groves were  
still—

A silence like a withering wave of death

Swept through the valley-plain from hill to hill !

Doom followed on and stamped his iron will

On all that fair creation. Hushed and deep

Was nature's terror ; and a deathlike chill

Passed in the wake of silence, like the sweep

Of some tyrannic hand when conquered nations  
weep.

The valley seemed to shrink with fear and dread.

It quivered, trembled, then was calmed and  
hushed ;

Then shook again, and swift the quivering fled

To eastward wave on wave—then paused—then  
rushed

Again. The plain, with spirits awed and crushed,  
Shook like a coward. Changed was all the scene.

All beauty from the face of earth was brushed.

A ghastly pallor blotted out the sheen

Of sunshine and of bloom, and fields of living  
green.

A hollow moan like ocean's distant roar

Was heard far off, and seemed the dying groan

Of some vast monster crushed forevermore

Beneath the promontoried heights of stone.

Naught else was heard save that and that alone ;

But the vast mountains heaved, and sank, and  
rose,

With heaviness again ; then overthrown  
Again, they sank and shook with awful throes,  
Then rose again and sank, and cringed with dying  
woes.

At once there spouted upward flames that broke  
From riven mountains, bursted from below  
Unto their very summits. Columned smoke  
Was hurled against the sky ; while peaks of snow  
Were mixed with flames in red and horrid glow  
Above the clouds, the whiteness and the fire  
Together mingling in stupendous woe,  
The flames e'er mounting higher and higher and  
higher,  
Enwrapping in their wrath creation's funeral pyre.

Then shook the plain like billows on the sea—  
Like islands in the ocean undermined  
And drifting off through storms in raging glee  
Unto the unknown waters undefined—  
Shook then the plain on-driven in a blind  
And furious blast ; and evermore amain  
The valley rose and sank with hideous grind  
Of rocks beneath the world, where racking pain  
Tormented depths of earth with tyrant wrath and  
reign.

Then from the mountain ran the deep abyss  
Across the valley eastward, hurling high  
The rending rocks that seethed with sulphur hiss,

And roared and flamed along the blackening sky.  
The rent ran east, as straight as arrows fly,  
From mountain unto mountain, plowing deep  
The valley as it went, and rushing by  
With reckless fury ; and into the deep  
Of eastern hills beyond it buried with a leap.

The earthquake had passed o'er the plain and left  
Its pathway as it went. Its fury passed  
From west to east and tore the mighty cleft  
To mark its journey. All its rage was massed  
To burst the mountains of the east, and cast  
Among them all its fires. Then cliffs were hurled  
Flaming into the clouds, and peaks aghast  
Stood trembling ; while about like leaves were  
hurled  
Whole chains of mountain domes—the ruins of a  
world.

And ever and anon the withering fires  
Rolled flames from earth to heaven, and awoke  
The thunders of the centuries ; and spires  
Of livid heat from out the craters broke,  
Mixed with ten thousand hills of billowed  
smoke ;  
Till glaciers, clouds, and flames were blended all  
The orient heavens under, like a cloak—  
A shroud of blackness—stretching as a pall  
On the horizon's verge—a flaming, fiery wall.

Then all the valley and the peaks of snow  
On either side afar were hid from view

In smoke that from the heavens settled low,  
Concealing all the fields of azure blue,  
And darkening on the earth which vaguer grew,  
Until in midnight darkness sank from sight  
The agony of elements, and threw  
A mantle o'er its suffering. The light  
Was past away, and morn was changed into the  
night.

A stillness came. The fires had sunk to rest  
Into the yawning earth and ceased to roar  
Along the reeling mountains of the west,  
And rocks were heard to grate and grind no  
more  
Below the world. The earthquake storm was o'er,  
And nature had grown calm. Then slowly rose  
The smoke and cleared away from all the shore—  
Rose slowly up, as loathing to disclose  
The valley's ruined fields and desolation's woes.

When clouds had cleared away and light returned,  
The plain extended as a blasted heath.  
The conflagration had swept o'er and burned  
All life away. Still hung in many a wreath  
The smoke about the snowy domes. Beneath,  
A blackened waste was all. The gaping chasm  
Across the valley ran like jagged teeth  
And yawning jaws, distended in a spasm  
Of rage to mold the earth in that Plutonic plasm.

That river beautiful, the Mono bright,  
No longer flowed along its flowery way.

Its banks were withered by the deadly blight,  
And all its shores were shrunk to shrivelled clay.  
Its waters were dried up ; and ashes lay  
Where once had sparkled down the crystal stream,  
In gladness dancing through the light of day ;  
And all was limned in lurid, lonely gleam  
Like drear, unfriendly shores as pictured in a dream.

The verdure and the flowers had ceased to be ;  
Yet stood about in dread and gloomy pride  
The branchless trunks of trees—though many a tree  
Had fallen in the storm—yet some defied  
The elements and stood—although had died  
All verdure and all beauty ever there.

The waste extended out on every side  
As far as eye could reach, and everywhere  
One panorama vast of ruin and despair.

Then stand with me upon the mountain crest  
'Mid century snows, and toward the east behold  
The Mono Valley far below, and dressed  
In the same ruin that the earthquake rolled  
Across it in the ancient times and old.  
Thou art above the cedars and the pines.

The wind about thee bloweth bleak and cold,  
Although 't is summer-time and brightly shines  
The sun on sparkling snow like shores of crystal  
mines.

But heed this not ; 't is splendid to be here  
And feel that all the world is 'neath thy feet ;  
The sky above thee bending pure and clear,

And at thy side the earth and heavens meet.  
Thou art alone with me in this retreat,  
Which is not loneliness, though high above  
The summer's sweltering noons and torrid heat.  
We are alone ; and not the tireless dove  
Can soar to us or bring its soothing coo of love.

We are alone. Think not there is no throng  
To storm along thy pulses as we stand  
Beyond the gaze of human, and the song,  
And words, and jargons, and the waving hand  
Of soulless multitudes who crowd the strand  
Along life's lower plains, and unaware  
What beauty is above them where expand  
The purer worlds.—Think not, for we can share  
The spirit of creation round us everywhere.

The Mono Valley reaches like a dream  
Before us, down immeasurably below.  
We trace the journey of its ancient stream  
Whose waters ceased their flowing long ago.  
That mighty chasm whose depth we cannot know  
We yet can trace until it shuns the eye  
Beneath the far-off eastern hills of snow  
Whose summits pinnacled arise on high,  
And pierce with dazzling white the azure of the sky.

Mark well along the valley how the path  
The earthquake made yet scars the glimmering  
plain,  
And lines the flight of subterranean wrath,  
Running afar a treacherous, sunken lane,

A deep, a geological Ohain  
Across a waste and desert Waterloo,  
Where all the valley's loveliness was slain,  
And beaten back, and burnt ; and all that grew  
Was trampled down by that which tortured as it  
slew.

But what is all of that to thee and me ?  
'T is naught to us if still the plain is dead.  
Upon the mountain height we stand to see  
On our one hand the wasted prairie spread,  
And on the other, far along the thread  
Of silver rivers toward the sinking west,  
Are pasture lands where herds and flocks are  
led,  
And where, at noon, in groves they sleep and rest—  
A land of loveliness, a land of beauty blest.

Down toward the west is this, but far away ;  
So far that vision nothing can discern,  
Save plains outspreading in the light of day,  
And the slight silver threads where rivers turn,  
One toward the Golden Gate, one south toward  
Kern

And meets Tulare's Lake, whose waters flow  
In restless waves o'er sandy shores that burn  
With arid heat—the lake in light aglow,  
A hundred miles away, ten thousand feet below.

Drear Mono Valley ! Death is on thy brow !  
Fair Joaquin Valley, like a paradise !  
Drear Mono, life with thee is over now !

Fair Joaquin, blooming under summer skies !  
To thee afar away I turn mine eyes  
And call thee Beautiful, and stretch my hand  
Down toward thee, feeling pride and passion rise  
Through all my nature ; and I feel the band  
That binds me unto thee, thou dreamer's dreaming  
land !

But, Mono, tenderness for thee I feel ;  
I feel a sympathy for thy distress.  
Fain would I turn away the cursèd seal  
That binds thee to thy doom of dreariness.  
Thou once wert fair and proud in gorgeous  
dress  
Of foliage and roses, ere the flame  
Of doom destroyed. I cannot curse or bless—  
I will not curse thy misery and shame ;  
I cannot bless—thy name is but an empty name.

A name, though beautiful, is naught to me  
Unless it meaneth something more than dust.  
No gentleness and truth can ever be  
Without a soul of kindness, love, and trust.  
Thy plains are dead and drear, a grating crust  
Of tasteless salt. Then get thee to thy own,  
And nevermore into my presence thrust  
Thy rude deformities—remain alone  
In thy despair, and mourn thy beauty that is flown.

Ye winds that blow eternally and blow  
Forevermore along the treeless heights  
Of pinnacles and domes where ice and snow

Have drifted through a thousand years of nights,  
I come to dwell with ye and your delights  
Awhile, for there is something in the wild  
And curbless winds that softens and requites  
My nature's sullen elements, beguiled  
By erring vistas which have tempted and reviled.

I came to ye, ye winds whose wings along  
The crags of ice a-rushing I can hear  
Above me and around me, brave and strong,  
And far away, and nearer and more near.  
I feel akin to ye. Ye are not drear.  
And I can linger here for days alone ;  
Yea, linger till the days shall round the year,  
And mix my waywardness with all your own,  
And feel how trust and truth have ever stronger  
grown.

In solitude there comes a soothing calm  
That buries memory of things that were,  
And o'er our errors settles like a balm  
To heal the soul that suffers in despair.  
The heart's complaining, whispering but of care,  
Is lulled to sleep ; and holier thoughts arise  
And unto higher plains our spirits bear,  
And bring a slumber over weary eyes,  
And give us peace awhile that comes from paradise.

But what is peace to me ! I scorn at peace !  
When I am left alone in solitude  
The chidings of my memory never cease  
Upbraiding me for phantoms I've pursued.

For I have erred ; and nothing but to brood  
In sullen spite will bear me through the storm,  
Still urging me to darker, darker mood,  
While all my nature marshals into form  
My cold, eternal hate, my love that still is warm.

Still warm, although betrayed and spurned to  
earth—

'T were better had I turned about and curst  
That falsest of all false ! There was no worth—  
There was no any thing that 's good—the worst  
Of all my enemies—she was the first  
To leave me in the hour of need—conspire  
To work my overthrow, till like a thirst  
That knows no quenching, burns the smothered fire  
Within my soul—I 'll fling to earth my gentle lyre—

I 'll join with earthquakes and the tumult wild,  
That fierce confusion which will stifle care.

I cry *peccavimus* that I have smiled

For one so false, so fleeting, and so fair—  
I 'll fling away the past with its despair,  
Back to its chaos ; and then I will turn

From all my aberrations, and will there  
Build up again. For I at least can learn  
From what has been, what themes will soothe and  
what will burn.

But why thus rave and bluster with the world  
And with its tyranny ? 'T is worse than vain.  
It can o'erpower me, for it hath hurled  
Me down already, manacle and chain

Hath fettered on me till the burning pain  
Is racking ; and I have nowhere to flee.

Why should I not rebel ! Why not disdain  
Submission while a hope I yet can see—  
I 'll tear my fetters off—I can, I will be free !

Yea, free ; though burnt and riven like that plain  
Before me as I stand—be free—once more—  
Though passions have consumed me as the reign  
Of earthquake fires consumed the Mono shore.  
Its blasted ruins nothing can restore.  
Deep trenches through my nature mark the rage  
Of my ambition. But the storm is o'er ;  
And I, although a youth, am bent with age  
And enter thus upon my fated heritage.

A heritage of deep, unbending pride  
That kneels to nothing, and would sooner die  
Than ask forgiveness ; and when once denied  
Asks nothing ever after, nor reply  
Deigns give to one who ever durst deny  
A favor asked. To such a soul I 'm chained ;  
And all my destiny is to defy  
The will and wish of others who have feigned  
To be my friends, then turned, betrayed me and  
disdained.

But soft ! Perhaps all yet may not be lost ;  
And love may not be all in ruins yet.  
I have been turned adrift, and tempest-tost,  
And I have seen my brightest summers set,  
But there is something I cannot forget

Comes whispering down my memory. I feel  
A flush from out the past where I have met  
My life's one idol, and my musings steal  
Back through the shadow shores that all the past  
reveal.

O Passions ! Nature ! Tempests ! Mingled all !  
I am the prey of all. I cannot turn  
To heaven or earth, but that a voice will call  
And chide me or upbraid me, curse or spurn,  
Or wake my recollections till they yearn  
For hours which are no more,—the youthful years,  
When hope was bright because it yet must learn  
The cost of wisdom and the price of fears,  
And what the world is like when seen through  
blinding tears.

I wake from dreams. I on the mountain stand  
'Mid snows eternal. 'T is the evening hours.  
The Mono Valley's drear and wasted land  
Lies to the east, scarred by the earthquake  
powers ;  
To west Madera's boundless fields of flowers  
Roll off to vision's bourne. I am alone  
Amid the mountains wild, and snowy towers,  
And they have claimed my nature for their own—  
Too true ! I am of ice, and fire, and storm, and  
stone !

Like fire and storm, I cannot bear control,  
My curbless passions, love, and scorn, and hate,  
Rush like tornadoes round my stranded soul  
And bear me onward to impending fate.

But, motionless as stone, I stand and wait,  
Nor kneel, nor ask for peace, nor plead ; nor cry,  
“ It is enough ! I yield ! Your wrath abate ! ”—  
Yea, sooner than to yield, I 'll stand and die,  
And to the last will hate and to the last defy.

But, peace ! Why will I to the last contend  
With foes unworthy me ? It is not well  
That I, a man, should stoop and condescend  
To lower levels, merely to rebel  
Against what there I find. I will not dwell  
In such indignity. I 'll take my way  
Down from this summit, over cliff and fell ;  
For night forbids that I should longer stay  
On this bleak mountain height. Low sinks the sun  
of day.

I wake as from a sleep. The eve declines.  
And, as my life warms through my being, I  
Search out my path, descend where ancient pines  
Grow far beneath ; and glades and meadows lie  
Around the river source. Then I descry  
The snowy summits where I stood of late  
Rise o'er me gloomy, terrible on high,  
Embattled in their everlasting hate,  
Tremendous in their power of all that 's grand and  
great.

## MABEL SAINT CLAIR.

I N the far-off summer land of light,  
Where the winds are soft and fair,  
Where the dewdrops cluster on lilies white,  
With a peaceful rest in the silent night,  
Is the home of Mabel Saint Clair.

'T is a summer shore and a crystal strand,  
And the whispering river flows,  
And the waves are washing the silver sand,  
And the orange groves afar expand  
Like the dreams that are dreamed in fairy land  
And only the dreamer knows.

Is the home still there of my Mabel Saint Clair  
As in days that are passed away ?  
Is her sweet song heard when the morning fair  
Is flushing with splendor everywhere ?  
Do the winds that come and the whispering air  
Breathe gently and tenderly, " Mabel Saint Clair,"—  
Sweet Mabel, my lost for aye ?

Ah, far, far away, far away is she now,  
And we have parted to meet nevermore,  
But still at the eventime roses will bow,  
When the breeze from Yo Semite kisses her brow  
As she lingers alone by the shore.

She 'll remember me then, I know, when the gleam  
Of the stars shall come down from the sky,  
And shall fall on the river's un murmuring stream,  
On the shore with its shadows that slumber and  
dream,  
And are stirred by the breath of a sigh.

'T is a beautiful, beautiful, beautiful shore,  
And again I seem to be there,  
Where the cold and the drear of the winter is o'er,  
And the tempests are gone with their rushing and  
roar,  
And the bright flowers bend with their bloom  
evermore  
At the feet of Mabel Saint Clair.

Then, Mabel, remember—I will not forget,  
Though my memory bringeth but pain.  
Thy parting adieu was the tenderest yet—  
For the last time on earth we have parted and met—  
The suns that were brightest forever have set—  
It is vain—it is vain—it is vain !

It is vain—it is vain. We have parted forever,  
And deserts between us are barren and dreary.  
Eternity's cycles can never dis sever,  
Or drive us asunder—a-drifting—no, never—  
Though driven and tempted and hopeless and  
weary.

## THE RING.

THE ring you gave me for a while,  
I 've kept and still am keeping ;  
It bids me think of you by day,  
And dream of you while sleeping.

And this is really, truly nice,  
As nice as it can be ;  
I like the ring, indeed I do,  
Because you gave it me.

But then—ah, here 's the saddest part—  
I must return the ring ;  
You said that I must bring it back  
On the first day of spring.

I said I would, and so I will,  
Just as I said, I 'll do ;  
I 'll bring the ring at first of spring  
And give it back to you.

But, there 's a question I would ask ;  
As sure as sky is blue,  
The ring 's so tight 't will not come off—  
Now, what are you to do ?

The ring is yours, and spring is here,  
But I can't understand  
How you can ever get that ring,  
Unless you take my hand.

---

*ELESIE DEL QUAMADA.*

WHERE the trees are green,  
By the river side  
And the ocean's waves are near and drear,  
Is a lovely scene,  
And a dream of pride,  
For the sky above is ever clear.

In that grove of trees  
A maiden dwells,  
Hard by Quamada's playful tide ;  
And the ocean breeze,  
Like a chime of bells,  
Comes over the water waste and wide.

When thou shalt pass  
That summer dream,  
Elesie del Quamada's home,  
Where the blooming grass  
And the morning gleam  
Shall tempt thee there to cease to roam,

Remember well  
That I was there,  
And on that shore of shell and sand,

The debonair  
And proud and fair  
Elesie led me by the hand.

Five blooming years  
Had passed away  
Since first she saw the world of flowers.  
Too glad for tears,  
Too proud for play,  
She watched the sea the summer hours.

She led me down  
Where the waves were wild,  
And told me of the rocks and trees,  
And the boulder's brown,  
Together piled  
Along the ledges, reefs, and keys.

The suns of France  
And the suns of Spain  
Had kissed her brow, though yet so young ;  
And from the glance  
And the proud disdain  
Of her night-dark eyes her soul was flung.

Her home was far  
From the passing throng  
On a dreary coast, almost unknown,  
And over the bar  
The waves' hoarse song  
Was ever rising drear and lone.

A few green trees  
By the river side  
Bent over the cottage where she dwelt,  
And in the breeze  
From the ocean wide  
They waved when the breath of air they felt.

I lingered there  
In the morning hours,  
And with her strolled beside the sea,  
For the day was fair,  
And the few wild flowers  
That bloom, were blooming on the lea.

Then I passed away,  
And she said adieu,  
With *au revoir* and *á dios* ;  
And the sun of day  
Sank in the blue  
Of waves, and the night air hovered close.

'T was long ago,  
But often yet  
I think how lonely she must be  
Where the billows flow  
Like a sad regret  
From the ancient sorrow of the sea.

And the darker night  
With deeper gloom  
Makes all the ocean lonelier seem,  
Till the morning light

On the shores of bloom  
Is flashing bright  
With a deeper gleam,  
And the ocean's might,  
And the playful stream  
Flow ever like a changing dream.

---

## KAWEAH.

KNOW ye where the dark Kaweah dashes  
through abysses deep ;  
Where no flower was ever blooming, and no wil-  
lows ever weep ?  
Where the rocks and crags impending rise like  
ruined cities rise,  
Desolate and cold and lifeless from the desert to  
the skies ?  
Not a sound of human whisper breaks that solitude  
of woe,  
Where the flapping wings of eagles on the stillness  
come and go.  
And the shades like famished spectres glide from  
rock to rock in gloom,  
And aloft in clouds and tempests high the frowning  
mountains loom.

Death ! It is the dread dominion where there  
nothing is but death.  
Nature there created monsters but denied them  
living breath,

Dragons with cold, stony faces, molded by volcanic  
fires,  
Grin and frown in horrid vagueness from their  
ancient funeral pyres.  
Torrents from the hidden caverns, bursting forth in  
foaming white,  
Roar and roar and roar eternal through the deep  
abysmal night.

Into that Eidolon Valley who would dare his way  
to tread?  
Who would cross those unknown borders where no  
pathway ever led?  
Gold! That siren song was singing. Hands were  
painting beauteous dreams  
For the sleeper. Sands were flowing. Golden  
sands in murmuring streams.

In the depths of dark Kaweah there were toiling all  
alone  
Two rough miners; and about them heaps of gold  
were all their own.  
They that realm had penetrated and had found the  
dream was true.  
In the sands of mountain torrents gold was bub-  
bling up to view.  
All alone they toiled and labored hoarding up the  
wealth untold;  
Winter's storms, and suns of summer saw the grow-  
ing heaps of gold.  
Human footsteps, none came near them; none ap-  
proached them toiling there.

Beetling, overhanging mountains walled around  
them everywhere.

There they toiled for years ; still hiding in a cavern  
dark and deep,

All their gold, still rolling o'er it rocks in huge and  
rugged heap.

'T was enough. Their work was over. In the  
sands the wealth untold

Still was hidden ; but no longer would they wash  
the drifting gold.

In the deepening shades of evening, by their cavern's  
darker door,

Sat the miners, worn and haggard, talking all their  
future o'er.

And the past came up before them, and they lived  
it once again ;

But they dwelt upon the future seen with fancy's  
brightest ken,

They had toiled, but rest was coming. Peaceful  
days would dawn at last.

Disappointments would be ended, every care with-  
in the past.

With their store of wealth, declining life would  
yield them pleasure yet.

Days would dawn, and at the dawning they could  
all the past forget.

They had spent their days together from their boy-  
hood when they played

By the bright blue Juniata in the quivering chest-  
nut shade.

They would buy the ancient cottage, childhood's  
home beneath the trees,  
And as peaceful as the river, life would pass in rest  
and ease.

Thus as fell the evening shadows talked they of  
the future blest,  
And when darker night came o'er them, on their  
couch they sank to rest.

Lone the night hung, dark and dreary, and one all  
unconscious slept,  
But one waked, and thoughts infernal through his  
brain like phantoms swept.

Night's domain of humid blackness was as day to  
the design

Which he pondered : " All this treasure might be,  
can be, must be mine ! "

All, it must be his. His comrade slept, and  
dreamed perhaps of one

Long forgot, except in dreaming—But—a groan—  
his dream was done !

He was dead. For thrice a dagger had been  
plunged into his heart.

But a groan, a gasp, a shudder, and a quick con-  
vulsive start,

And the dying man extended his rough hand and  
called, and felt

For his comrade who was silent and who like a  
coward knelt,

Hiding 'neath the rocks that shelving met the cav-  
ern's stony floor,

Trembling when the gasping ended and he knew  
his work was o'er.

It was o'er. A murderer standing in the dark be-  
fore the cave  
Heard beneath him waters dashing, heard above  
the night-winds rave.  
And an awful shudder shook him, and he turned  
to flee for aid  
To the cave again, but shrinking, he drew back  
and felt afraid.  
Down the gorge the winds of midnight hoarsely  
howling blustered by,  
And the clouds of deeper blackness wildly swept  
across the sky.  
Then in fear the coward trembled, and he knew  
not where to go,  
While the dreary dark was dragging desolate away  
and slow.

When the morning late and lonely came and  
brought the autumn day,  
Down Kaweah's rugged valley slow the murderer  
took his way.  
All the gold he left behind him in the cavern  
buried deep  
And untouched ; and there his comrade lay in  
death's eternal sleep.  
Murderer flying from the crying voice that late had  
called for aid !  
Murderer shrinking when the phantoms seemed to  
wave a bloody blade !

All the world lay blank before him like a half-forgotten dream.

“Murderer,” winds and billows murmured : “Murderer,” lisped the mountain stream.

At the midnight, voices echoed back the murmurs,  
and the air

O’er him and around repeated the same murmurs  
everywhere.

Over every land and nation like a one who flies  
and flies,

Hurried, haunted, chased, and driven toward a  
goal that earth denies,

So he fled o’er isles and oceans, seeking refuge  
evermore

From the fiends that yelled behind him, coming  
like a tempest roar.

Years and years their length had numbered, and  
the murderer wandered yet,

Chilled and numbed by icy winters, scorched by  
suns that never set.

In the cañons of Kaweah fell the evening’s dreary  
shades ;

And the world grew vague and dimmer like mirage  
of morning fades

In the noonday. Then there wandered slowly up  
the rugged glen

One who seemed to seek for refuge from the homes  
and haunts of men.

Tottering frame and failing footstep, hair as white  
as winter snow

Told him agéd, and about him hung a mystery of  
woe.

Like a ghost among the shadows silently along he  
past,

Bent by age as with a burden, and beneath it  
sinking fast.

In the low and gloomy doorway of a cavern dark  
and lone,

Overhung by threatening mountains and half hid  
by heaps of stone ;

By that doorway stood the stranger, peering vaguely  
through the dark,

Where a skeleton before him lay disjointed, still  
and stark,

Torn by wolves, and half devoured ; and from the  
grottoes in the stone,

All untouched by hand of human wealth of gold  
untarnished shone.

Long he stood like stony statue, him, that haggard,  
aged man,

While his thoughts in swift remembrance like a  
deluge backward ran.

Mournfully the winds were murmuring 'mong the  
shelving crags on high,

Mingling murmurs with the dashings of the torrents  
rushing by.

Night was brooding, and the darkness gloomily and  
deeper fell,

And the beasts of prey in hunger filled the rocks  
with scream and yell.

From the cavern's darkened doorway turned the  
murderer worn and slow,  
Heeding not the storms above him, nor the angry  
flood below.  
And he passed into the darkness up the wild and  
rocky glen,  
While the night came swiftly downward, and he  
ne'er was seen again.

---

BONNIBEL DE LA SANTA YNEZ.

**I**F the world were as fair and as lovely as thou,  
and the morrow no shadows of sorrow should  
bring,  
It would be but in vain to look ever beyond, for the  
time would be all as a beautiful spring.  
And the ice of the winter and fever of summer  
would be as a memory lost in the past ;  
And the sadness of autumn, unfeared and forgotten,  
no longer its dreariness o'er us would cast.

I have met thee, fair maiden of Santa Ynez, by that  
whispering river that murmurs and flows  
From the land of the south, 'neath the oak and the  
willow that wave when the breeze of the morn-  
ing-time blows.

I have met thee and loved thee—thou knowest it  
truly—I speak to thee true—I will ever be  
true—

I have wondered if Eden at dawn of creation, with  
heaven above it unclouded and blue—

I have wondered if Eden with rivers of crystal that  
    flowed where the lilies were bending in prayer  
In their deep adoration and worship and beauty,  
    and moving in calmness in waves of the air—  
I have wondered if Eden where music was deepest,  
    where all that was deepest was lulled to repose  
In rapture of dreaming and wonder of loving, when  
    the zephyrs were soft as the breath of a rose—  
When I met thee, fair maiden of Santa Ynez, then I  
    wondered if Eden in years of the eld,  
A maiden as fair and as lovely as thou, in the prime  
    of its summer celestial held.

Not Eve in the spring of her life and her beauty  
    was lovelier, fairer, or gentler than thou ;  
And the love and the bloom of her youth was no  
    deeper than the love and the bloom on thy  
    beautiful brow.  
In her soul was the wealth of the love and the kind-  
    ness which since o'er the earth have been scat-  
    tered afar  
To her daughters, the truest, the fairest, and pure-  
    est, where'er they have been and wherever  
    they are.

But to thee, gentle maiden, to thee hath been given  
    a rapture of feeling surpassing them all ;  
And a rapture of beauty, and rapture of gladness—  
    Oh ! a fortune like thine is shall nevermore  
    fall—  
It shall nevermore fall to the lot of a mortal. Tell  
    me not, then, I have loved thee too well ;

For the depth of my dreaming, my depth of emotion,  
the depth of my nature, thou only can tell.  
It is vain. It is vain. We have met and have  
parted, have parted for ever and ever.  
Adieu !

We have met, and have loved, and have severed  
forever ; but my heart unto thine shall forever  
be true.

When the years of the future shall bear me, and  
leave me, a-drift or a-wreck on the sea or the  
strand ;

Then my memory will wander, and seek thee, and  
find thee, as I found thee to-day in the summer-deep land,

As I found thee to-day by the murmuring river,  
where the oaks and the willows were waving  
above

In the soft winds of morning that came from the  
ocean, and wandered away with a whisper of  
love.

I will crown thee with roses, my memory will crown  
thee, as to-day I have crowned thee the queen  
of my heart ;

And thy brow shall be gay with a garland of lilies,  
whose bloom and whose beauty shall never  
depart.

And the beat of thy pulse shall be glad ; I will tell  
thee a story of love as I told thee to-day,

When thy hand was in mine, and thou trembled  
with gladness, for thy soul with emotion was  
carried away.

Then the lisp of the river, the whisper of breezes,  
 seemed kindred to us as we wandered alone  
 By the Santa Ynez, where the sun of the morning  
 with a flooding of rapture and ecstasy shone.

O the morn and the hour and the moment that  
 blessed us ! O the river !—there 's nothing  
 more wondrous to me

Than a whispering river in calmness and softness—  
 I lingered alone by that river with thee.

O the river !—Thy love was as deep as the river, as  
 calm as the river, as pure as the stream

Which the river bore on through the light and the  
 shadows, the dark of the shade and the bright  
 of the gleam.

Even so was thy love ; for thine hand I was press-  
 ing, and I felt how thy spirit was flowing to  
 mine,

Like the tide of a river that flows to a river, and  
 mingle together, my spirit and thine.

And the warmth of thy nature was like the deep  
 springtime, all rapture, and passion, emotion,  
 and love ;

As pure as the dawn in the Garden of Eden, as  
 pure as the dreams of the angels above.

O maiden of Santa Ynez, I have loved thee ; I have  
 told thee I loved thee ; thou answered me low,  
 Thou answered me, saying : “ I love thee more  
 fondly than ever this world in its coldness can  
 know.”

And then why have we parted ? The river still  
 whispers beneath the green banks, and the  
 willows still wave,

And the flowers will blossom and wither and perish, where the breezes still wander and tenderly lave.

And the sky is still deep with the fervor of summer, and the hills of the south in their beauty still rise ;

But all beauty besides is as naught to thy beauty, and the azure is pale to the blue of thine eyes.

It is useless and vain that the world should e'er fathom the deep of thy mystery—let it go by ;  
We have parted forever. Let mystery darken all else till the day and the hour that we die.

But my fair Bonnibel of the Santa Ynez, while thy true heart shall beat thou wilt never forget,

Thou wilt think of the past and wilt call it a dream, ere thou learned of the dulness and care of regret ;

For thou knew it not then, and no shadow of sorrow had ever come over thy morning of life ;

Not a grief had oppressed thee, no promise been broken, no darkness come o'er thee with gloom and with strife.

O my sweet Bonnibel, could a heart so confiding and trusting and playful and gentle as thine, Ever feel a remorse, or a grief, or a sadness ?—It has mingled with sorrow in mingling with mine—

When thy love like a waft of the wind from the southland had blended with love from my shadowy soul,

Then I fear that a chill from the dark of my nature  
had whispered to thee of a mystical goal.  
But let that go by. In the depth of my being I  
have treasured thy love, nevermore to dis sever.  
It is mine, it is thine—let eternity witness !—I will  
claim thee and love thee for ever and ever.

Then adieu, Bonnibel de la Santa Ynez !—then  
adieu ! but remember, remember the past,  
When the years of the future shall gather about  
thee, and the gloom of the eventime round  
thee is cast ;  
When the aftertime summer above thee is lonely,  
then think of that morn in the summer of bliss,  
When all nature was hushed in the wonder of glad-  
ness, and the sky bended down in a rapturous  
kiss.

Remember that morn in the shade of the willows,  
where the river was clear as a crystal, and low  
Were the whispers of waves ; and we sat 'mong the  
flowers, and watched the glad river a-murmur-  
ing flow.

And thy hand was in mine while I told thee I loved  
thee, and thou said'st that we never and never  
should part ;

And in rapture I blessed thee, caressed thee, and  
pressed thee to my bosom till heart was beat-  
ing to heart.

But let that go by. 'T is the part of a story which  
the world shall not know ; it shall never be told.

We will shroud it in mystery ever, and deepen the shadows of time while the past they enfold.

We have parted. In parting we knew 't was forever ; the river beside us in beauty was gleaming ;

And the touch of thine hand was the saddest and kindest that ever I knew in my dreariest dreaming.

'T was a dream like a memory—passing and fading—fading and passing—but never away :

Then adieu, Bonnibel de la Santa Ynez ! we have met, and have loved, and have parted for aye.

---

BUENA VISTA.

YE summits of Sierras ! I am here !  
I pause, and westward look for the last time.  
Beneath me far the rolling hills appear,  
And farther down is Sacramento's clime,  
Wrapped in the fulness of the spring sublime.  
From southward, but beyond my vision's ken,  
Flows the Joaquin, the grandest theme of rhyme  
E'er touched upon by bard's poetic pen—  
I bid ye all adieu, but I will come again.

My way is east across the continent,  
To lands where angry winters rave and roar ;  
But, ere I turn, I pause in my intent,  
And look again on California's shore.

The more I linger here, I love the more  
Those undulating hills and plains below.  
To me they overthrong with legend lore,  
And in time's mighty current rise and flow,  
As mysteries and dreams from out the long ago.

Around about me lie the century snows,  
The snows that I have seen from plains afar,  
All glittering in the light that ever glows  
In summer days when skies all azure are.  
And here I am where thunders scathe and scar  
The crags, and in deep echoes live and roll  
In dread when winter drags his booming car—  
And here I am ! I feel my panting soul  
Rise into ecstasy and throb beyond control.

The Golden Shore beneath me to the west,  
Even in the distance beauteous more and more,  
In verdure of the springtime proudly drest—  
O beauteous, beauteous, beauteous Golden Shore !  
To east I go where mountains cold and hoar  
Frown o'er Nevada, gloomy waste and drear ;  
But farther lands than these to wander o'er  
Is now my task.—The eastern plains appear—  
Farewell, thou Golden Shore ! the parting hour is  
near !

## A SONNET.

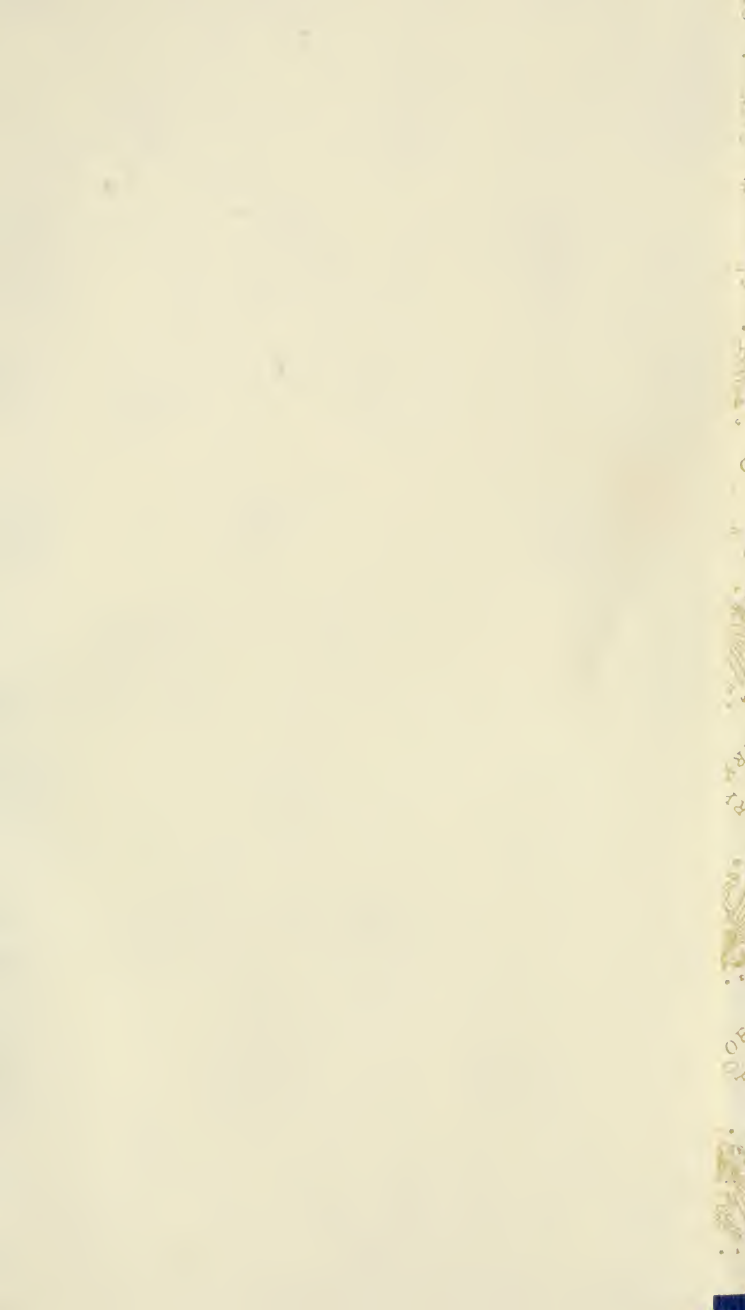
THEN fare thee well, bright land, but not for aye,  
I 'll come to thee again when spring shall blush  
In conscious beauty, and thy zephyrs play  
Where weeping willows idly swing, and brush  
Along the shaded flowers the livelong day.  
I 'll dwell again where roaring rivers rush,  
And mountains rise in grandeur proud and gray,  
Or white with snow and cold, where glaciers crush  
The rocks by pressure slow—I will return,  
Fair land, again to thee—I 'll come again  
In happier days than this—I 'll ever yearn  
For thee until I come again, and then  
I 'll with thee stay forever. But, adieu  
To-day to summer fields and skies of summer blue !

THE END.









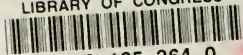




JUN 78



LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 016 165 364 0